THE COMMONWEAL

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THE LORD HIGH ADMIRAL

MEXICO'S latest revolution has ended in a pretty definite fiasco. Having been largely a case of "internal revolutionary dissension," with an effort to corral the Presidency concealed behind a military smoke screen, it was not a movement which the Mexican people or the conscience of the world could support. In one important respect, however, the Escobar flurry constituted a test. Mr. Morrow had come out definitely for a strong central government in Mexico, at any cost. The reasons advanced in support of this policy are obvious. If there exists in any corporate community a responsible person, he can be held responsible. Such persons have been exceedingly rare south of the Rio Grande, with the result that Washington was perforce fluctuating between inability to defend the rights of its nationals and interventionism. The first was infinitely precarious, the second infinitely costly. Señor Calles possessed the stability of strength. Why not build upon that?

To date the results are not all that might have been expected, but they are substantial. Portes Gil, a civilian with no power of his own, has been maneuvered into the office of chief executive. One by one powerful military or political rivals have been entered in the column of the missing. Gradually such financial substance as Mexico retains has been concentrated into the "national bank," which in turn depends upon its ability to borrow money. Most important of all, however, is the circumstance that the pricelessness of recognition by the United States has been fully demonstrated. Though Mr. Morrow has by no means tucked the government of Mexico into his pocket, he has now got something like a hitch on its hind leg. Pull hard enough and the critter may be brought round. Of course the rope may break. The custodian may be caught napping. And there are other imponderables.

Doubtless the most important of these is the still unsettled religious controversy. The forces of Escobar got no assistance from those who used the battle cry of "Christ the King." But while the fight to the north was in progress, the real population of Mexico (which resides, as has often been pointed out, in the central states) abetted the fight against the government. An army battling for religious liberty and civic reform grew and grew. Oddly enough, however, no very vigorous attempt to put it down is being made. Instead, one is offered some highly significant news.

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First, Calles is proceeding not toward Jalisco but "into retirement," and the federal army as a whole seems destined temporarily for a campaign of dolce far niente. All of which makes it seem that for some reason or other no determined effort is planned against the "religious rebels." Secondly, the papers have given us a most remarkable exchange of remarks between Archbishop Leopoldo Ruiz y Flores, spokesman for the Mexican hierarchy, and the President, Portes Gil.

From the Catholic point of view, Archbishop Ruiz's statement differs hardly at all from the declaration given to The Commonweal by Bishop Diaz more than a year ago. That "the Church and its ministers are ready to coöperate to the fullest extent for the betterment of the Mexican people" means, primarily, that Catholic leaders are willing to discuss a modus vivendi with the government. But for some curious reason Señor Gil appears to be greatly pleased with the pronouncement. A recent despatch describes him as amiably looking forward to a "conference" with ecclesiastical authorities. One may be pardoned for lapsing into a vision at this point—there is a stage in the background, and an actor to the fore; but the most important personage in the show is hardly evident anywhere. He is the manager, producer and prompter all in one. And his name is Morrow.

The plan is shrewd, far-reaching, human. We have every reason to hope for its success, so that the martyrdom of millions may cease and the rights of conscience be restored to a people. Yet it must be borne in mind that, ultimately, the intent of this policy is to force the government of Mexico into a rôle very like that of the Lord High Admiral in the play. The United States will settle a few crucial problems for a neighboring nation according to its own code. This nation itself has not spoken, has not even been permitted to speak. Perhaps it is better so. For the farce which consisted in pretending that the "revolution" in Mexico was a movement for democracy will laugh itself out of existence. And even the unwilling may be forced to see that such salvaging and reconstruction of Mexico as events make possible must be traced to the silent but relentless authority of a government which believes in facts and law. Lest we be too hopeful, however, it may be admitted that the great tests yet to come are fully equal to those surmounted during the past troubled months.

Three problems are immediately apparent. The regulation of finance is not an abstract venture, but a very practical matter which cannot be disposed of without respecting the rights of individual citizens. One is thus face to face with the status of ecclesiastical ownership in Mexico—an ownership which has been unsettled ever since the revolutionary movement began. Secondly, it remains to be seen if government in a dictator-ridden land will respect the voice of the people, particularly when that is also a Catholic voice. The record in this case is sombrely instructive. Finally, one wonders if the military power has actually been centralized, or whether the calm now existing is only a momentary lull. The Catholic problem in Mexico is intimately bound up with these three. It can be settled only when they are.

WEEK BY WEEK

MR. OWEN D. YOUNG has worked hard to dispose of the reparations problem in a reasonable way. Two weeks ago the Allied and German figures were separated by a great gulf. The first called for fifty-eight annual payments, the average sum of the first thirty-seven of which was to be 2,198-000,000 marks; the second stopped short at the thirty-seven, and suggested that 1,650,-000,000 marks would be a reasonable yearly contribution. Mr. Young's compromise accepts the Allied plan, with the difference that the average sum mentioned above has been scaled down to 2,050,000,000 marks. On the whole it looks like a good suggestion, which the Germans could accept as at least a temporary revision of the Dawes schedules. Great Britain, however, is in the throes of a campaign and in no mood to afford the country a glimpse of a magnanimous party. Mr. Churchill promptly endorsed the Balfour note anew; and since this stipulates that Britain is to collect only what it owes to the United States, the result is that the opportunity to curtail collections has been passed along to the United States. This country, however, has always clung to two principles: first that it was collecting from Germany only enough to settle the claims of its nationals; second that the war debts are simply business obligations which cannot be lumped with reparations dependent upon the victory. The situation at present is, therefore, most interesting.

The Reparations Quandary

SOME time has elapsed since the resignation of Monsignor Seipel from the government of Austria, and almost the only impressive news from that harassed country concerns the new premier's self-propelled typewriter. A French critic makes the point a little harshly when he says that the Monsignor's fate is to live in a country where he has no intellectual rival. Though he was undoubtedly honest in declaring that a desire to give himself entirely to the work of the priesthood, the great ex-Chancelor has nevertheless borne his country clearly in mind. Years ago he developed the economic plan by which alone Austria might be financially and socially redeemed; but the Socialists opposed it at every step for purely political reasons, and the Catholic forces were badly inoculated with inertia, royalistic visions and Anschluss dreams. Every failure to advance was attributed to him, and political separatists waxed anti-clerical. The final straw was probably the

Eclipse in Austria

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Vienna housing laws, which allow property owners less income than suffices to pay the taxes. We predict that unless the country decides definitely to go bankrupt, Monsignor Seipel will be heard from again.

A Challenge to the House

THE debenture provision in the Senate Farm Relief bill amounts, so many congressmen say, to a usurpation of rights constitutionally invested in the House alone. Legislation involving appropriation is, indeed, supposed to originate with that body. Consequently the procedure of the House in its approach to the bill promises interesting developments, though the chances are that the issue will be settled by avoidance. This would obviate any open clash with the upper chamber, which is notoriously jealous of its prestige and resentful of any reprimand, either direct or implied. Yet everyone who has closely scrutinized congressional deliberations during the past ten years knows that while the Senate has been oratorical and dilatory the House has, in the main, quietly gone about its business and entrenched itself more solidly behind public respect. Many have indeed predicted that the preponderantly Republican Senate, which has proved so unresponsive to the whips of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover, will meet final discipline from the body that sits south of the Capitol rotunda. Possibly Messrs. Longworth, Tilson and their fellows do not feel that the time has come to fling down the gage of battle. Nevertheless it would be a mistake for them to allow, in whatever quarter, any disregard of constitutional stipulations while they are demanding such close adherence to all law enforcement.

Paths to Peace

IT IS pretty generally admitted that the view of mediaeval Europe which saw it simply as the forcing-ground of wars was more picturesque than precise. It proceeded partly from that ingenuous story-telling concern with the obvious and the immediately colorful which made nearly all former history a chronicle of conflicts; partly, it may as well be said, from a desire to paint the existence which was so largely controlled by the Church as a dark and bloody business. It has yielded steadily with the growth of what may be called the conception of integrated history, with its impartial and broadly distributed research. Cumulative studies in a dozen fields, economic, philosophical, sociological, legal, are uniting to widen out and fill in the picture that was once dominated by those fixed figures, the glittering knight and the suffering peasant, and to show that our ancestors had many occupations besides leaving their cabbage patches to spring to arms at the call of their feudal lords. If they were acquainted with battle and sudden death, they knew, too, the arts, the productivity, the slow, secure growth of the humaner traditions, which are possible only where peace is a fairly continuous external circumstance for the determining mass of men, and the indisputable norm in their minds.

THERE has been, in consequence, an increasing admiration for the specific ways in which this peace was promoted during the ages of faith. Especially of late, since a veritable passion for peace has taken hold of humanity, have the earlier concept of universal brotherhood, the nobility of its affirmations and the reality of its charity, gained recruits. With very genuine gratification we note the Christian Science Monitor among them. In an editorial printed on April 5, the Monitor analyzes the future hopes of the world, and quotes with approval the doctrine "that nations are in reality only large families," and its corollary "that nations and states are subject to the same rules of morality as govern the actions of individuals. This is a view," continues the editorial, "which during the last 400 years has suffered an eclipse so total that it has had little or no effect upon international affairs. The need for it to be restored to an effective position today is . . . pressing. . . ." No sounder reading of history could be asked. The world which the Reformation brought to a close did regard itself as one family, under one acknowledged Head; it did confess to one universal morality; and its pilgrimages, its truces, its arbitrations, its councils and canons, its very excommunications and interdicts, are still in the record to show how truly that morality was honored in the observance. We salute the Monitor for its fine and disinterested editorial. It is by steps like these that we shall all find our way to the paths of peace.

Raskob and the Worker

SINCE the times are not propitious for immediate action, Mr. John J. Raskob has assured the press that his dream of a combined investment trust and insurance company to serve the working men of this country by investing their savings in the equities of American industries will be realized as soon as finance assumes a more stable character than at present. It is certainly encouraging that a man so immediately identified with big business as is Mr. Raskob should be concerned for improving the lot of the small wage-earner: specifically, for lifting him out of a present dilemma wherein he must choose between safe but low-yielding investments, and stocks which too often are swindles. His plan was announced only in general outline, but so attractive has it appeared that experts have predicted a response which will make the proposed corporation the most powerful financial organization in the world. But what seems of more importance than this is that Mr. Raskob has avowed his purpose to be altruistic. And as he has proved before that his ability in these matters amounts to genius, so he has demonstrated that his sincerity is not to be questioned. He himself is the best guarantee of the integrity of this new enterprise.

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THOUGH Dr. John A. Ryan's article on prohibition has been as widely commented upon as anything ever written for The Commonweal, it enjoys the virtually unique distinction of having been ferociously trounced in the Senate by the Honorable J. Thomas Heflin. Unfortunately, as quotation after quotation rolled away into the cherry-blossom-laden atmosphere of Washington, it became sadly apparent that the Senator is not a reader of our magazine. We shall not suggest that this is what has ailed him all along. It must suffice to relate that, in attacking Father Ryan's stand on Volsteadism, he was simply repeating excerpts selected and glued together heterogeneously by the editor of the National Methodist Press, who in turn relayed the material to the Christian Advocate. While this affords a clew to the sources whence the Alabaman Senator derives his information regarding the Catholic Church, it also absolves him from blame. The editor in question had simply tried to show that Father Ryan's attitude toward prohibition uncovered the "very dangerous" conception of allegiance to the state which, in his opinion, characterizes all Catholic minds. This innocent attempt to advance learning and dispel intolerance suffers from the customary blight: it is certain, like its brethren among illuminating errors, to be found out in the end. Meanwhile, in the interests of public enlightenment, Father Ryan has reprinted his article in pamphlet form. It ought to prove easy to read and quote from. Our only hope is that Senator Heflin will be moved to follow this example and pamphletize his address. Comparisons would then be simple.

The Dangers of Wide Reading

APROPOS of the many comments which have been passed on Father Ryan's article, we set these words: "No statute has ever yet attempted to make personal drinking a crime." They are taken from an address recently delivered in New York by Dr. S. E. Nicholson, associate superintendent of the Anti-saloon League. They were expressed in an attempt to define the real purpose of prohibition policy, a purpose which has confused many eminent minds, both in this and other lands. From the outset, according to Dr. Nicholson, the critics of prohibition have failed to understand it; they have fallen "into the fatal error of assuming that the primary purpose of the prohibitory laws is the inhibition of the personal use of liquor." He clarifies the situation for us, at least, by explaining that "the real purpose of the Eighteenth Amendment and its enforcing statutes was the prohibition of the traffic in beverage intoxicants, including manufacture, sale, transportation and exportation." Hostility to all these processes which are necessary to bring a glass of wine to the citizen's table was inevitable because "the traffic had become malum in se." Of course—and Dr. Nicholson will forgive us if in agreeing with him we also express our sacrificial regrets—"while the use of liquor has been affected by prohibition," this is merely "incidental to the purpose of the legislation."

An Experiment Clarified

STATISTICS have an undeniable charm for us all. Even such relatively meaningless figures as the number of miles between one nebula and another make themselves attractive as they roll through consciousness. When we get down to human facts, the game naturally grows more exciting. You can bluff and bank on statistics. They are the nerves of business, the stock-in-trade of the salesman. They mean a great deal in war and politics. But the most important fact about them is their scientific significance—the amount of truth they enable us to arrive at inductively, and the number of errors they help us to correct. No doubt religion has as yet utilized them insufficiently. Catholic leaders in particular have come to realize both the value of data and the difficulty of getting an adequate supply. Now comes the Reverend Adolph Frenay, of Albertus Magnus College, to tell us that nothing less than the establishment of a general chancery office for ecclesiastical statistics will fill the present need. There is now an abundance of Catholic statistical publications. What we want, says Father Frenay, is the right agency for accumulating and digesting the statistics themselves. All in all, we think his suggestion a good one. But might it not be cheaper and just as serviceable to employ a competent statistical agency, acting under the behest of the hierarchy?

Gunning for Facts

THAT was a lucky movie producer who unsuspectingly tapped the dynamite which nature and tradition have secreted in the Tyrolean peasant. When he hired 3,000 of these simple mountaineers to help reproduce the battle of Berg Isel—that glory of their history in which Andreas Hofer led their great-grandfathers to victory against Napoleon's French and their Bavarian allies—this gentleman probably bargained for picturesqueness plus a lumpish and awe-struck conformity to the mechanical demands of the usual film fracas. The despatches state that the company advanced from Innsbruck garbed in the costumes of 120 years ago and brandishing flails, the immemorial weapons of embattled husbandry. In the article of conformity, however, they departed from specifications quite completely. Perhaps the habiliments of a time gone by released emotions connected with warlike pictures on a thousand cottage walls. Perhaps the words "Berg Isel!" were enough. However it was, they fell upon the Twelfth Tyrolean Regiment, who were being French and Bavarian for the occasion, in a spirit so charged with ancestral memories that thirty-seven of the hapless regulars were wounded and a first-aid corps from Innsbruck came out (in the wake of the police) to take control. Somehow, the incident

The Shade of the Sandwirt

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does not strike us as wholly ridiculous. The spirit of the strong and simple Hofer, the keeper of the Inn upon the Sand, is still alive, it seems, in those high and rocky places. We are glad to know it, though we are neither a friend of the producer nor an enemy of the regiment who each, in such different ways, got more than they were looking for.

In Behalf of Gaelic Culture

WE HEARTILY endorse the suggestion, sponsored by the Gaelic American, that a Gaelic Room be established in the New York Public Library. The riches, influence and appeal of the Gaelic tradition have long since become perfectly familiar to scholars. Unfortunately, however, Ireland itself has never been able to finance and conduct further research into this great domain. Prior to the war German students had homesteaded much of it, with the result that they were able to modify considerably previous impressions of the trend and development of earlier European civilization. Who knows but that a room in the New York Library, which now attracts thousands of research workers from all parts of the country, might eventually spur on young Americans to devote their attention to Gaelic lore? They in turn could popularize their findings and so enlarge academic horizons. But even though no such goal were attained, the proposed room is worth having for its own sake, and as a testimonial to the background whence so many of our sovereign citizens have come. The example of Columbia University, which has established Italian, French and German foundations, is certainly worthy of wide and spirited emulation.

What's in the Air?

RECENT estimates disagree as to the amount of dirt, including unconsumed coal, "appreciable quantities of poisonous carbon monoxide," and sulphur acids "strong enough to eat through linen," floating in the atmosphere of New York City. One sets the figure at 2,100 another at 2,200 tons. We express no preference. The lesser is as capable of inspiring horror in the soul as the larger; perhaps more capable, since it is more plausible. And either renders us somewhat more congenial than we would otherwise have been to Mr. Francis Keally's prediction of a future architecture which will have no windows. With good stout bricks and impenetrable steel it will shelter our children from the impurities of air. Ventilating machines will wash the outside atmosphere before it is sent within to feed the lungs of human beings, and lighting systems will distribute a light tenderer than the sun's equally throughout the interior. But out on the streets Manhattanites will still be martyr to those two million and some odd pounds of dirt. Instead of a reversion to the windowless homes of the cliff dwellers, we wish that Mr. Keally or one of his colleagues at Columbia would predict, simply for our peace of mind, the contriving of some marvel which would suck every smallest grain of dirt from out the atmosphere and dump it at the precise point where the submarine Hudson plunges over the world's greatest cataract into an archaic sea. In the failure of this we shall all of us bid posterity prepare for the migration of cosmopolitans to the little cities which Mr. Golding writes about.

Academic Incomes

THE fact that a sufficient number of young men and women continue to offer their services to education apparently is no indication of the brightness of prospects in the teaching profession. In this field, at least, any conclusion drawn from the number of its prospectors is to be mistrusted. In a recent bulletin of the National Education Association we learn that 34 percent of the elementary school teachers of the country receive less than the $2,000 which is the average income of the 45,000,000 gainfully employed persons in the United States. Their median salaries range from $1,212 in cities of 2,500 to 5,000 population to $2,063 in cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants. Those who teach in junior high schools receive salaries varying from $1,399 in the small cities to $2,348 in the metropoli; instructors in senior high schools can adapt their budgets to incomes between $1,584 and $2,680. Even when it is noted that the figures are somewhat deceptive in that they fail to consider that the average worker in this country receives his salary for a twelve-month year, whereas the teacher's year is one of nine, it cannot be concluded that our bright young people are pursuing academic careers from gross, mercenary motives.

War between Worlds

YEARS ago some people, at least, took very seriously a number of suggestions regarding possible invasion by citizens from Mars. We remember that an Indiana farmer designed a shotgun which he believed particularly effective against celestial infantry, and kept it within reach of his bed. Now comes a far more serious inkling of potential disaster. An expedition led into Siberia by Professor Leonide Kulik has made a study of the damage caused by a group of meteors which struck the earth during 1908. Photographs and surveys indicate, so we are told, that the heat and impact of this falling mass wrought havoc in a district a hundred miles square. It must be confessed that little could be done to ward off so terrific a bombardment. Even confidence in "the future progress of the race" would, in all likelihood, be of no avail. Doubtless such cataclysms are exceedingly rare, though mankind seems to have conserved vague memories of some of them. Most popular impressions of the world's end stress some such collision between stellar masses. Just how that finale will come, however, matters very little. Come it must; and so if humanity had been assigned no goal of the spirit, its petty meanderings here below would be futile indeed.

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POTOMAC SUMMER

THE lament of Senator Fess over the Senate majority for the debenture plan in the Farm Relief bill is in many respects a very frank admission of motives and aims. In his letter "to a Toledo constituent" it was not the ill merits of the debenture which concerned him, but the threat of political catastrophe. It was not Senator Borah's economic judgment which he ventured to attack, but his political discretion, and the political discretion of Senators Nye, Brookhart and others who urged the special session upon the President, and then voted for a measure which the President did not like. "From the beginning," wrote Mr. Fess, "I have seen the danger to the country of the special session." What was the danger? Apparently that trouble might arise upon which the Democrats could capitalize in the next congressional bye-elections. No sessions, no debates. No debates, no hard feelings. And smooth sailing for good Congressmen who could still stand unchallenged on a platform of giving the farmer the sort of relief he wants. As it is, "we are in the session for all summer, if not all year."

Senator Fess's letter throws light on other things than his chief interest in debentures, or lack of debentures. It helps to explain the otherwise puzzling question of why, in a session called primarily to further the interests of agriculture, and particularly the agriculture of the Middle-West, there should be introduced a tariff bill which makes such skimpy concessions to the farmers that, at the time of writing, leaders of no less than nine mid-western states are speaking of revolt as if they mean it. On the other hand, certain eastern industries are offered such fat percentages that one asks whether even the avowed friends of the administration are with it in all matters. "Limited revision" was President Hoover's request. The answer was a proposal increasing the rates, in some instances, from 15 to 133 percent.

Mr. Grundy of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association, who Representative Garner insists is the real author of the bill, makes the declaration (defensive certainly) that Pennsylvania was not well treated. True, Mr. Grundy got his schedules for textiles, cement, plate glass, sheet glass, cast iron pipes, bricks, et cetera, but not for pig iron. Apropos of which Senator Reed made a memorable remark. "The pig iron producer," said he, "is as much entitled to a decent living as the man who raises carrots." Good as this is, we think it would have been better if he had said mushrooms. The duty on these delicacies, grown extensively in several counties of Pennsylvania, has been boosted 33 percent. We find nothing in the bill regarding carrots.

Here then is a bill which experts have estimated will cost the consumers of this country something like $500,000,000, and yet which pleases few except sundry New Englanders who are not boot and shoe men, some of the franker cronies of Mr. Grundy, and the cattle and lumber interests of the West. Consequently various Senators are sharpening their pencils, but the first guess is correct as to the direction their rewriting will take. There will be little blue-penciling, although we do hope for the elimination of Section 402, which denies the right of an importer to appeal to the customs courts from the judgment of an appraiser on a given rate. But there will be many upward revisions of schedules, and if these are only distributed with some sense of geography, perhaps the disturbing conditions which Senator Fess complains of will disappear, and Congress will again be brought under the proper thumbs. Of course it is too late to expect escape from the heat of a Washington summer, although timely enough to hope that in those temperatures the "danger to the country" will melt away.

THE CASE OF MRS. DENNETT

WE HAVE preferred to keep "sex" in its more strident aspects out of The Commonweal, for the reason that this seems a matter which intelligent people (and their confessors) can settle without editorial assistance. During recent weeks, however, a number of things have occurred which seem to call for plain speech. The decision of a Boston jury that Dreiser's An American Tragedy is an obscene book has inoculated with new vigor—and for strange reasons—prevailing opposition to Catholic views of sex morality. Indeed, one may say that this decision has popularized the "movement for contraception" vastly more than anything of the kind which has occurred for years. We think that Dreiser's book is of no great importance. We believe furthermore that Catholic citizens ought to uphold existing sex-propaganda laws in so far as they are able, though it is clear that this defense is bound to become increasingly difficult. But the difficulty will only be increased, and ultimate failure merely hastened, by such language as Judge G. W. H. Hayes employed in his charge to the Dreiser jury.

The Judge declared that in estimating the book, it was not "necessary to find that the words alone are indecent." He even went on to say that "if the language used is such as to arouse unchaste thoughts in the minds of youths into whose hands the book might fall, you are warranted in finding a verdict of guilty." In the face of such a charge, one can only ask with the Psalmist, "Lord, who shall stand?" More specifically, it leads one to inquire as to just how the important work of conveying information about sex to young men and women is to be performed. Here is where Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett comes in. Having written and mailed a pamphlet dealing with the "sex side of life," she was tried by a Brooklyn jury, found guilty and fined. And immediately a crusade for her liberation was set afoot, while sleuths began to scent a "Catholic censorship."

A very nice old lady, when asked recently for her

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literary credo, replied with great firmness: "I object earnestly to the facts of life." But as boy guidance and marital rehabilitation develop, it becomes increasingly clear that the Catholic conscience, at least, can adopt no such categorical negative. Books written from a definitely religious point of view (notably Gillet's Innocence and Ignorance, translated by the Reverend J. Elliot Ross) have emphasized the importance of freeing youth from the handicap of sex ignorance. And now comes Father Kilian Hennrich's Watchful Elders, a little treatise issued by the Bruce Publishing Company, of Milwaukee, to make the same point with renewed emphasis. Father Kilian is a Capuchin whose life has been devoted to Catholic boy guidance.

He has written for parents, whom he sees confronted with "a most difficult task," that must be performed if scores of boy and girl tragedies are to be averted. As a priest he remains wisely conscious of the unparalleled sublimating value of the Christian faith. The very language of the Church affords easy starting-points for what is often an embarrassing discussion. And if a human being can as a child exchange "innocence" for "knowledge" normally, as part of the discovery of all things the Lord has made, he will be safeguarded at least in a measure against rampant evil suggestion. This last is probably not more violent in our time than it has been during the past. But two conditions have changed: a far larger number of people are without religious beliefs, and the world of nature is remote. Nothing can ever fully compensate for these. It would seem, however, that in the realm of sex as elsewhere the teaching of natural law is what Newman might have termed a "civilizing preliminary step." And so physicians and educators have sought for ways in which such teaching might be correctly and effectively imparted. Mrs. Dennett's pamphlet is one of these ways.

There is room for legitimate difference of opinion regarding it. Elsewhere we are publishing the reasonable view of a distinguished and highly respected Catholic physician—which will, we hope, help to dispel the illusion that the "Catholic mind" is all compressed into one lump. On the other hand, we are in profound disagreement with much that has been said regarding Mrs. Dennett. The New Republic, in its issue of May 8, reprinted part of her pamphlet, with the remark that "the passages we omit are entirely in the tone of those we print." If that be true, the word "tone" is certainly one of the most extensive in the language. The jury objected no doubt to a series of expository passages and drawings which are about as completely undraped as a bean-pole in a blizzard, and which will shock nine out of ten American parents nearly out of their senses. Such language—which the extracts published by the New Republic do not remotely approximate—could not be circulated in the average American community without the risk of raising the roof. Why not recognize this fact, which simply means that like all other literary productions "sex pamphlets" must reckon with their audience? Are we to believe that liberty is all with the platform, and that respect for others as well as ordinary common sense are things of the past?

Mailing privileges usually mean promiscuous circulation. Now certainly it may be quite true that Mrs. Dennett's essay would be genuinely helpful to a good many young folk. After one has reached a certain period, beating around the bush is only a ridiculous subterfuge. What to do then is a matter for wise educators and physicians to decide. Though it may be true that the "scientific approach" to the problem of sex information sometimes forgets that the final aim must be to sublimate instinct, there is no sense in talking about "pretty violets" and "blushing bluebells" to human beings on the verge of messing up their lives. And so if Mrs. Dennett's pamphlet were distributed by physicians and counselors as they saw fit, few would (or could) object. But if we must go on campaigning for "freedom," the only thing that will happen is that all the pink teas will become even more stupidly erotic than they are now.

We particularly object to a certain note which injects itself into this discussion. In its issue of May 15, the New Republic returns to the charge, by quoting a remark by Mrs. Thomas A. McGoldrick to the effect that her protest was able to quash a birth-control talkie by Mrs. Sanger. "The Catholics, who constitute a minority of the people of the United States, ought to be the last to demand a censorship of this sort," opines the editor, who then proceeds to ask what liberal Catholics, including our humble selves, think of the matter. The reply is rather simple. We think, first of all, that the habit of seeing in what any individual Catholic utters the voice of the Church is very annoying and misleading. Why not admit once and for all that Catholics are varied and distributed just as authors, politicians and New England Puritans are distributed—that some one no more speaks for all than Mr. Brisbane for American journalism or Professor Fisher for New England?

Certainly it is difficult to see why Mrs. McGoldrick and Mrs. Sanger are not equally entitled, under the law, to a fulsome say. No doubt, of course, it would be soothing to behold both relaxing into quiet meditation. On the subject of Mrs. Sanger we confess to having made up our minds. She is quite as fanatical as Carrie Nation ever was, and probably just as harmful. It seems to us that the endeavor to book lectures for her is not worth the trouble it would cost an intelligent person otherwise employed. But if there must be enthusiasm for her endeavor, we should like to make the following suggestions: that an ordinarily earnest effort be made to discern the "Catholic point of view" before this is defined; that so fundamental a problem as sex be dealt with calmly and considerately, for the obvious reason that frankness alone never safeguarded anybody; and that every stampede for "freedom" has been rather hard on sundry folk in the crowd.

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IS OUR CHRISTIANITY PAGAN?

By T. LAWRASON RIGGS

During recent years one of the favorite arguments against Christianity has run something like this: under Caesar Augustus, many oriental cults incorporating a great deal of primitive religious custom sought to displace the Roman beliefs; and of these Christianity is the sole important survivor. In the following article, Father Riggs examines this argument as it is made in one contemporary book—Mr. Arthur Weigall's The Paganism in Our Christianity (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons). We regret that foot-notes giving the exact references to the text had perforce to be omitted.—The Editors.

AN AUTHOR of widely popular books on Egyptian history, Mr. Arthur Weigall, has turned his attention to Christian origins with a self-confidence only equaled by his prejudice. In a sense, of course, no writer on the subject can be free from bias. One does not write such a book as his recent The Paganism in Our Christianity unless one has a thesis; and the Christian tradition is too potent a force to be dealt with in a frame of mind indifferent to the truth of its claims. The facts concerning it must matter to any man in his senses more than those concerning Tut-ankh-Amen or Cleopatra. But though the reader can scarcely ask for absence of bias, he has a right to expect the objective presentation of evidence, some sense of proportion, and some common sense. Friends and foes of the Christian tradition should alike refrain from rash generalizations and deal fairly and squarely with any relevant facts.

Yet this ideal is remote from Mr. Weigall's mind. He does not present a single new fact or draw a single significant conclusion. His volume is a popular rehash of data and inferences culled from the works of Frazer, Loisy, Reinach, Robertson and other radical theorizers, whose views, though often refuted, are still fashionable in certain circles. As a contribution to the history of religion its value is nil. It was obviously written in haste; one can only guess at the meaning of the remark that "all our ancestors back to the days of Our Lord could be comfortably carried on one ordinary London omnibus." Yet the book is likely to be widely read, and has already been reviewed with solemn approval. It demands, therefore, more than passing notice.

Mr. Weigall would of course emphatically deny being hostile to Christianity. It is while professing to be a follower of Christ that he states his views of what sort of man Christ really was and what He taught. Our Lord is spoken of early in the book as "the Eternal One," and as "Lord also of the twentieth century." But these phrases turn out to be empty when we read later that He was "simply a man," and that He was

> the son of a carpenter, who went about the country preaching and healing the sick [by faith-healing of course!] who was ultimately regarded by a small group of disciples as the Messiah or Christ, and after being taken down from the cross as dead, was seen alive by many persons. . . . Practically the whole of His teaching was concerned with conditions in this life.

So much for theories fashionable not long ago, which held that Christ's teaching was entirely concerned with the next life! Thus do the radical critics fluctuate in their emphasis on one or another aspect of Our Lord's teaching, while ignoring others that conflict with their favorite thesis.

> [Christ] knew no theology, beyond the fact that God is love and that the kingdom of God in the hearts of men can and will be established on this earth by obedience to the rules He gave us by precept and example.

Everything else that He is supposed to have taught and done consists in reality of misinterpretations and accretions. Miracles, dogmas, sacraments, cannot win "the approval of twentieth-century brains," and must forthwith be jettisoned. The residue will be pure Christianity, since the aforesaid elements are really relics of paganism.

Mr. Weigall loses no time in telling why he is so anxious to offer his conclusions at present. The English Prayer Book crisis has, he informs us, spurred him to action. He confesses to a "certain prejudice" in favor of Anglicanism, being, as he admits with pardonable pride, "the stepson, the grandson, the nephew, and the cousin many times over of English clergymen." One wonders what the survivors of this clerical galaxy think of their relative's way of repaying his debt to their church, as one reads that resistance to Romanizing tendencies is a small matter compared to the necessity of a far more extensive housecleaning. A thorough de-paganizing of theology is necessary if such implacably modern brains as Mr. Weigall's are to be won back. It might well begin, one infers, with meditations on The Golden Bough.

The Anglican Church is thus the immediate object of Mr. Weigall's attack. Since, however, his guns are chiefly leveled at such basic doctrines as the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement, it is against Catholicism also that he fights. If he does not more often mention the Catholic Church, it seems to be because he considers her both incorrigible and negligible.

The thesis that Christianity (I shall continue to call it that in spite of Mr. Weigall) is in reality a syncretism or amalgam of pagan mystery cults constitutes the book's raison d'être. A remarkably large though motley collection of citations and arguments to this effect is crammed into less than three hundred pages. Actual errors are not infrequent. Thus, the Assump-

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tion of the Blessed Virgin is not celebrated on August 13, and "God of Gods" is a mistranslation of "Theon ek Theou" in the Nicene Creed. "Evidence" which is no evidence at all abounds, attaining incredible climaxes of absurdity in the chapter on Mithra, wherein we are told that the importance of the words "Upon this rock I will build my church," was due to their approximation to the Mithraic idea of the "Theos ek Petras," the "god from the rock"; that Saint Paul's exhortation to "put on the armor of light" is probably a Mithraic reference; and that even the Pope's tiara is not without the same stigma! Many of these allegations are patently worthless, and it is in any case impossible to deal with all of them without publishing an annotated edition of the book. I propose, therefore, to say something of Mr. Weigall's treatment of the New Testament.

The book's discussion of the complex problems involved in New Testament criticism is summary in the extreme. It proceeds, in questions of authenticity and date, by the simple method of ignoring all but the most radical opinions. Thus Harnack, whose "reaction" in these matters is highly important, is mentioned only once. The results leave the documents just where the author wants them. They can thenceforth be treated as mythical or legendary whenever they interfere with his views, but as reliable for the reconstruction of the merely human and mundane Christ whom Mr. Weigall is willing to endorse. An entirely mythical Gospel, à la Drews and Brandes, is not to Mr. Weigall's liking, and is therefore rejected, though certain very wild ideas of the mythists are spoken of with respect. We are solemnly told:

> One begins to think that the name of Our Lord's mother may have been forgotten and a stock name substituted . . . because so many gods and semi-divine heroes have mothers whose names are variations of "Mary"; Adonis, son of Myrrha; Hermes, the Greek Logos, son of Maia; Cyrus, the son of Mariana or Mandane; Moses, the son of Miriam; Joshua, according to the Chronicle of Tabarí, the son of Miriam; Buddha, the son of Maya; Krishna, the son of Maritala; and so on.

Now Miriam *is* the same common Hebrew name, of course; and if "Myrrha" and "Maya" and "Maritala" are variants of it, the derivation of "Middletown" from "Moses" is a plausible linguistic conclusion! Such twaddle irresistibly reminds one of a passage in another more realistic book:

> "They were learning to draw," the Dormouse went on, "and they drew all manner of things—everything that begins with an M—." "Why with an M?" said Alice. "Why not?" said the March Hare.

Another strange idea of the mythists, to which Mr. Weigall devotes a whole chapter, is their interpretation of the release of Barabbas. It is thoroughly characteristic of mythist mentality. The facts utilized are, briefly, as follows. In some places, for instance in the Babylonian festival called the "Sacaea," criminals were treated as mock kings before execution, a procedure supposed to have its origin in primitive human sacrifices. There is no evidence that such a custom existed in Palestine at the time of Our Lord's Passion —except a far-fetched interpretation of Caiaphas's remark about one man dying—*not* "being sacrificed" —lest the whole people perish. (It should be noted that Caiaphas obviously refers to the danger of the Romans suppressing a Messianic uprising and that the quoting of the remark, reported only by Saint John, shows how historic the Fourth Gospel can be when the mythists want to use it!) However, similar customs did exist among the Roman soldiery at the Saturnalia and possibly influenced their mockery of Our Lord, though the suggestion seems altogether superfluous. Barabbas is dragged into the picture by Frazer and Reinach as (in Weigall's words) "the traditional name for the victim in an annual human sacrifice," because his name means "son of the father" (it may also mean "son of a rabbi," and was in any case extremely common) and because an idiot named *Karabas* was treated as a mock king and afterward released by the Alexandrians in 38 A. D., in order to show their scorn for Herod Agrippa I. Hence, says Reinach, "Jesus was put to death, not *instead* of Barabas" (Reinach misspells the name) "but *as* Barabas." The moral is that the Gospels are inextricably intertwined with legend. Mr. Weigall regards the release of Barabbas as real, but as showing that the Crucifixion *"was* a human sacrifice." In either case the foundation of the whole elaborate theory about a "Barabbas sacrifice" is equally flimsy. I have dealt with it in some detail to show how a perfectly credible incident, reported by all four Evangelists, can be treated by those who have taken leave of common sense under the influence of an obsession. One wonders only why nobody has thought of citing Puss-in-Boots's master, the Marquis of Carabas, as additional evidence.

The book's main thesis, that Christianity was transformed by pagan influences, and especially by the mystery cults, has brought forth an enormous mass of literature. It is by no means a new theory. Thus, the Citizen Dupuis, in 1794, described Christianity as a sect of Mithraism. In recent years the theory has been elaborated by Reitzenstein and Loisy, and is constantly implied in the erudite though biased researches of Frazer. Most writers of the school attach the chief blame to Saint Paul for the alleged paganizing of Christianity. Mr. Weigall, however, follows those extremists who see the pagan taint even in the Synoptics. Be it noted that Cumont, an eminent authority on the mystery cults in general, and unquestionably supreme in his knowledge of Mithraism in particular, warns against the danger of assuming borrowings by Christianity, and considers the pagan influence to have been virtually nil.

An outstanding feature of late Roman paganism was the widespread popularity of those cults which, in

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contradistinction to the perfunctory ceremonial of the state religion, promised to their votaries direct relations with divine powers, and often personal immortality, to be obtained by initiatory rites whose secrecy was jealously guarded, but which we know to have involved symbolic dramas descriptive of various myths. Similar cults had long existed in Greece, notably at Eleusis, but those that won more than local popularity in the Roman empire, including the mysteries of Mithra, Isis and Cybele, were chiefly oriental in origin. As the traditional religion lost its vitality the personal, emotional appeal of the mysteries met with widespread success, culminating in their adoption by the emperors themselves.

From the fact that the mysteries were secret, we know of them chiefly through fragmentary references and remains, many of the former being remarks by hostile Christian writers. Cumont says that we know about as much of Mithraism as we would of mediaeval Christianity if we had only the Old Testament and some sculptured fragments. Among the rare accounts of more detailed character is that of the mysteries of Isis, by Apuleius, in the second century after Christ. Much of the evidence is from an equally late period, and indeed it was not until then that the oriental mysteries had spread widely. The syncretists are therefore guilty of anachronism when they use data from a period when these religions were conscious rivals of Christianity.

Another fault of method is the constant exaggeration of resemblances between the mystery cults and Christianity. The former dealt, indeed, with personal immortality, and contained such features as sacrifices, lustral rites and ritual meals regarded as means of communion with divinity. But unprejudiced investigation shows that the likeness to Christian doctrines and sacraments, noted by the early Fathers and ascribed to the devil, is extremely slight, and can be better explained by universal religious tendencies than by borrowing. Not that Christianity sprang in its essentials from these tendencies. Such a theory is superfluous, in view of the historical records of its Founder's teachings. It is true, however, and it is a tribute to rather than an indictment of Christianity, that, as Grandmaison says, "the Christian mystery satisfied, with its moving story, its sacramental system, and its assurance of eternal life, the immense hope which raised men's minds at that period."

At a later time there were no doubt unimportant borrowings from paganism. The dates of certain festivals, of which Mr. Weigall makes so much, some liturgical phrases and ritual details, occasional saints' legends, scattered folk-customs, tolerated or reinterpreted by the Church—these inessentials were probably influenced here and there by paganism, for the Church very wisely did not destroy where she could reconsecrate usages of long standing. To maintain, however, that her doctrine and sacraments were fundamentally pagan in inspiration can only be done by far-fetched comparison, by much use of question-begging terms, by assuming that any resemblance means borrowing, and by ignoring chronological probability.

To argument by such methods the syncretists have devoted an industry and learning worthy of a better cause. Perhaps their most obviously strained comparison is that between the sufferings of various gods, or demi-gods, and the Passion of Christ. Mr. Weigall harps on the theme:

> Ancient mythology is full of stories of incarnate gods who suffered on behalf of mankind, who died, were buried, descended into hell, and rose again from the dead, and through whose redeeming blood the faithful were saved. . . . Adonis, Attis, Dionysus, Herakles, Mithra, Osiris and other deities were all saviour-gods whose deaths were regarded as sacrifices made on behalf of mankind; and it is to be noticed that in almost every case there is clear evidence that the god sacrificed himself to himself.

Now Adonis, Osiris and Dionysus are slain by malice or accident; Attis mutilates himself because of Cybele's revengeful jealousy; Mithra slays a bull from whose blood all creatures spring, but does not die himself; and so forth. Evidence of a willing self-sacrifice by any of these mythological figures, far from being "clear," is very scanty and flimsy. There is no connection between their sufferings, where such were supposed to have taken place, and the sins of man; there is no "redeeming blood" shed by them; there is no resurrection, beyond an apotheosis, or vague ideas connected with the annual revival of vegetation. Weigall's statements are, in short, veritable triumphs of question-begging and unjustified generalizing.

As the complement of such strained comparisons the syncretists are forced to ignore basic differences between Christianity and the pagan cults. The latter's moral element was usually non-existent, while Christian teachings and sacraments were essentially related to morality. The pagan cults dealt with vague and floating mythological figures. Indeed, the question of historicity in regard to such personages and their adventures, as Grandmaison says, "ne se pose même pas"—was not even raised—except by a few "euhemeristic" philosophers bent on finding historic bases for all myths. Christianity, on the other hand, was based on a perfectly historical Man, Who lived in a definite place at a definite time, and concerning Whom the facts were reported in trustworthy documents, after being witnessed by those who first spread the Faith. These facts, and the Old Testament religion, whose hopes Christianity fulfilled, are sufficient to account for it. The totally unnecessary reference to pagan sources can only be supported by the distortion of one kind of evidence and the ignoring of another. Those methods pervade the present book, described by its publishers as "disturbing." It should not be in the least disturbing to any well-informed Christian, but the fact that such a book can be regarded as significant is disturbing indeed.

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UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF MEREDITH

By ROBERT SENCOURT

THE following poems were written down in 1869 in the Monthly Observer, a little magazine which went round in manuscript among its own contributors. It was edited by the contributors in turn. One of these was Mr. Charnock, George Meredith's employer: another was Ellen Mary Nicolls, a daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, who ceased contributing in order to marry Meredith. This brilliant woman of thirty, the widow of a naval officer, immediately awoke passionate admiration in the young poet, then only just twenty-one. She could not resist the impetuous passion of his suit. At first they were rapturously happy, as an unpublished poem written by Meredith during the honeymoon attests:

No more to sever our embrace
Was night a sword between us,
But richest mystery robed in grace
To wrap us close and screen us.

His mood is expressed in two other unpublished poems:

Every hour was golden leaved
With wonders rich and new . . .

And

We paced a realm enchanted,
A realm rose-vistaed, rich from this
But not from this transplanted.

This enchantment, however, could not endure the stress of poverty. In 1856, after a violent scene in which Meredith pleaded with her to remain with him, she announced that she was about to elope with Henry Wallis, a young painter whose pictures in the Royal Academy already showed promise of distinction. Meredith announced that he could forgive everything in her except open unfaithfulness, but that if she eloped, he would not take her back. To this he remained firm. A year or two later Wallis had himself forsaken her, and she returned from Capri to England with a son who was not Meredith's. She lost her reason soon after, and died in 1863. The story of this tragedy is told in Meredith's famous sonnet sequence entitled Modern Love.

The poems which follow here express Meredith's religious idealism (influenced by his years in the Moravian school at Neuwied from 1842 to 1844) as his love for Ellen Mary Nicolls was ripening. They are the first poems of Meredith of which any record remains. Written when he was twenty-one, they show that warmth which Dante Gabriel Rossetti admired in the little volume of poems which Meredith published in 1851, and which won from Charles Kingsley the phrase that only "he who begins honestly ends greatly." The rapturous mood of Love in the Valley is hardly ripe yet: the poet has got hardly further than the fervent idealism which made him write down in the Monthly Observer that "the universe is but a succession of links, and we are all united in nobility and gentleness and love." The first poem is called Saint Thérèse:

With holy earnest eyes enshrined,
She bendeth on her knees;
Her voice is heard above the wind
Shrill from the northern seas;
The sisters stoop on either hand,
She smileth mild on each,
And in the wind a choral band
Comes singing to her speech.

Her hands are tented, palm to palm,
When folded as in rest,
Beneath her dawning eyelids calm
Upon her snow-white breast,
Her snowy garments rustle clear,
As snowflakes rise and mix,
And to her neck there presseth near
A silver crucifix.

Around her gloried form, the air
Is starred with falling snows
That cover all the convent bare
With symbolled pure repose.
Above her haloed head, the sky
Is studded thick with spheres
All swimming to one blissful eye
Whose eye is bright with tears.

She knoweth that the time will come,
And in the deepened night
Discerneth well her heaven home,
The morning and the light,
And through the shadow of her pain
A seraph sister voice
But now she meeteth once again
That others may rejoice.

A sonnet deals with faith in immortality:

Hateful are those false themes of speculation,
Goading the wise and harassing the weak;
This world of ours so lovely and unique
Why is it subject to such sad vexation?
'Tis all for want of proper occupation,
Philosophers become so void and vain;
With birth, life, death, mind, matter, bone and brain
Can there be any doubt of our creation?
And of our spirits' early information,
Intelligence, and action? Chief whereby
Through rapid glances of the inner eye,
The soul is sentient of its own salvation,
And in the faith which such a knowledge brings
Feels the bright glory of its future wings.

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There is also a poem entitled Brotherhood:

The land is rich where'er we go
With flowers and fruits in clusters.
No little spot so poor and low
But some sweet tribute musters;
Abundance blesses, all things show
We should bless one another;
Take, says the Lord, but man says "No"
But these are mine, my brother.

Strange is the difference which breeds
Dissension among creatures
Which binds the slave for slavish greeds
And brands his godlike features.
One family are we, and Oh
The children of one Mother!
Live, says the Lord, but man says "No"
Thy life is mine, my brother.

The treasures of the earth, how vast,
Exhaustless and unnumbered!
Stored with the livings of the past
Since first old Chaos slumbered,
And is there then no thankful glow
To knit us to each other,
Ah God! when will this dreary "No"
Melt at the name of brother?

Religion is a war of sect,
And fatherland of factions,
Each deems himself the whole elect
But not through virtuous actions,
Not in the deeds whereby we know
The light no day can smother
Alas! to all things man says "No"
And still denies his brother.

The other contributions which young Meredith made to the Monthly Observer are translations from Goethe, Uhland, von Eichendorff and Heine. From Heine, My Heart:

Thou lovely fishermaiden
Steer in thy boat to land
Come to me and sit thee down
We'll whisper, hand in hand.

On my heart thy little head
Lay down, and fear not me,
Thou who daily trustest
The wild, wild sea.

Even as the sea, my heart
Has storms, and ebb and flow,
And many a beauteous pearl
Lies calm in its deep below.

From von Eichendorff, Moonlight:

It was as if the heaven
Had kissed earth with its beam
That she in blooming glimmer
Must sweetly of it dream.

The breeze went over the fields,
The ears were waving light,
The woods were gently rustling
So starry was the night.

And my whole soul outspreading
Her wings abroad to roam
Flew through the sleeping land
As if toward its home.

From Goethe Meredith translated two poems—the following brief lyric:

Joyful
And woful
And thankful remain;
Swaying
And praying
In hovering pain,
Heavenward exulting
Death hurled from above,
Happy alone
Are the souls that love.

as well as the rather sardonic commentary to which the great German poet gave the title Geständniss (Confession):

What is hard to hide? The fire,
For by day the smoke betrays it
And the flame by night, the monster.
Again 'tis hard our love to hide,
For howsoever you enclose it,
Out of the eyelids it softly smites you.
But hardest 'tis to hide a poem,
Under no bushel you'll conceal it;
Has but the poet freshly sung it,
Thereby is he quite overcome;
Has he just smartly dashed it off,
He writes that the whole world shall love it;
To all he reads it, glad and loud,
Whether it fret us or instruct.

And lastly Meredith made a translation of the famous and touching lyrical poem entitled The Landlady's Daughter, from Uhland:

Three students went over the Rhine one day
And to a good landlady made their way.
"Now, landlady, have you good wine and beer,
And how is your little daughter dear?"
And as they into the chamber stept
In a black coffin they saw she slept.
The first from her face the white veil took
And looked at her long with a sorrowful look.
"Ah! wer't thou alive, thou maiden flower,
Thee should I love from this very hour."
The second he put the white veil to
And turned him away, and wept anew.
"Ah, that thou liest on thy death bier,
Thee have I loved for many a year."
The third again put by the veil
And kissed her on the lips so pale.
"Thee loved I ever, and still I love thee,
And thee shall I love through eternity."

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THE RUSSIAN EXPERIMENT

By LOUISE LAFITTE

Mysterious and isolated as never before even in her shadowy history, Russia is today primarily an "experiment." The following paper incorporates what we believe to be trustworthy, first-hand information. It should be borne in mind that the writer never wished to judge or considered herself competent to judge. Here a picture is presented from which we believe the individual reader may be enabled to draw the appropriate conclusions, although of course the evidence which Miss Lafitte here submits to the readers of The Commonweal does not in any way claim to be a complete dossier.—The Editors.

MY FRIEND arrived from Russia the day after New Year's. Her two-year leave of absence from the States had nearly expired. She is a naturalized citizen here, of course. The Russian authorities gave her the ultimatum to waive her American allegiance, destroy her American passport and "become one of us," if she hoped for further welcome in Soviet Russia. She thus found herself between the devil and the deep sea. She has decided, for the present, to commute between Russia and the States, thus retaining her American citizenship and right of entry, as well as Russian "domicile privileges."

Among a host of bizarreries and quaint vagaries, anomalies and paradoxes, Russia also holds the distinction of being the only country that discriminates against its own nationals and in favor of foreigners. A citizen from Tierra del Fuego, an African cannibal, a Papuan, is certain to find a greater welcome there than are its own hapless expatriates.

The mere appearance of an honest-to-goodness foreigner is a sesame in Russia. Foreigners have been Russia's particular pets since the dawn of history. She coddles, cherishes, nurses them. Foreign tourists, business men and concessionnaires live off the cream of the land. They are trundled about the vast empire (republic—pardon!) accompanied by guides, interpreters, nurses, mentors; they occupy the best hotels, first-class railway accommodations; opera and theatre boxes. In spite of occasional protests, they are given many privileges gratis. Of course, the foreigners see only what the authorities wish them to see. It would be a grave breach of hospitality to do otherwise, even if they did know the language and the customs and the psychology of the natives.

More than plague, cholera, pox, famine and flood does the Russian government fear and dread its own expatriated nationals. My friend was watched and followed by a secret spy during the first three months of her stay. Mail was not always sacred.

On her arrival in Moscow (in the fall of 1927) my friend received from a friendly commissary the key to an absent comrade's apartment: three rooms, bath and shower, an unheard-of luxury in present-day Moscow. This comrade-tenant and his current wife were away in Paris, and a domicile automatically reverts to the last tenant after a three-months' occupancy. News of my friend's unholy, bourgeois opulence spread. A number of comrades with current wives attached themselves to her and her palatial apartment. A comrade, working or idle, is allotted a certain number of square yards of "ploshchad"—literally platform, space. Of course this law does not necessarily apply to the mighty, the commissaries, superintendents and such. The original occupant of my friend's temporary abode was one of those god-like beings. He had hoped to keep his absence secret. When my friend moved in, his sister commenced bombarding him with letters urging him to fly back to Moscow and reclaim his domicile before the termination of the fatal three months. Also, the price was raised from six roubles (the abode's cost) to forty roubles per month, which was shady Soviet ethics. At any rate, what with an army of fellow-comrades, a belligerent female, intermittent cooking, tea-drinking, late discussions, my friend found life far from a bed of roses. Russians have never been slaves to systematic habits. The current couples and co-tenants blew in at any time of day and night and proceeded with their housekeeping tasks and domestic squabbles. As my friend worked during the day, she expected to do some sleeping at night. This she found utterly impossible. In the meantime the original occupant of the palatial home arrived from Paris post-haste, on the the eve of the three-months-domicile clause expiration. His current wife gave my friend a hasty but thorough inspection and found her wanting. My friend had the full legal right to remain as cotenant, since the sumptuous domicile exceeded many times the permissible space allotment for two persons. But my friend waived rights and departed.

Water rates (I am not certain of electric current charges) are according to one's social and economic position. The nepmen (bourgeoisie) are charged many times as much for water as are the proletarians, comrades. The same applies to supplies, schools, theatres, opera. Top-notch prices for the pariahs—the bourgeoisie. No admittance for nepmen's children of school age, no cheap, or free, railway transportation; no clothes allotment; no free domicile. When the electric current goes on strike, the proletarian's wires are repaired with such despatch as is possible in Russia, while the nepman is left in Stygian darkness—frequently on the floor above, or below. The nepman may not buy at government stores and at cheap rates. He is welcome to left-overs only, scraps and at exorbitant rates.

The cheap items in Russia are (1) transportation

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(2) opera and theatre seats (3) government bases (stopping places) for worker-travelers everywhere. Meagre fare and crowded domiciles are atoned for by opera tenors, sopranos, contraltos, the famous Russian bassos; empty stomachs find solace in futuristic décor and morbid plays. The theatre is flourishing and ultra-modern. Plays are largely propaganda. Even so, the theatre is an escape from "grey Mondays." And it does not merely entertain, it teaches and awakens thought.

My friend traversed Russia from Leningrad to Transcaucasia for a nominal sum. She stopped at government bases (fifty kopeks a day). She was given ten weeks' vacation with pay plus two weeks at her own expense—a three-months' vacation. She bathed in Crimea and Caucasia, sailed the Volga, stopped at Caucasian villages. And in Russia traveling is a constant delight. It never has been standardized. Exotic landscapes, bizarre natives, picturesque clothing, strange tongues and architectural vagaries keep the traveler amused and absorbed. The Caucasian aborigines, over a hundred "nations," cling to their cliffs and lead the existence of biblical times. The Tartars in Crimea do the same. Their polygamy is not interfered with. The various regions and provinces of Russia proper have their peculiarities of dress, ways and customs. Traveling in Russia is never monotonous. There is a surprise, a delight at every turn. The huddled, herded, shabby and not overfed Russian does not object too strenuously to suffocating, smoke-filled railway carriages; to soot and dust, and wailing infants, and perspiring, odorous fellow-passengers, and feather beds, and pillows, and food baskets, and travelers over, under, alongside, in his very lap.

The cost of clothes is staggering. The government allows a number of yards of material per person (proletarian). This is made into clothes at home or professionally. The ready-made industry is in its infancy. Per capita production is low. There is a shortage of necessities, not to mention luxuries. New structures (what there are of them) are jerry-built, and frequently collapse before or soon after completion. This is due to corrupt builders and incompetent workmen and methods.

Meat, bread, eggs are not appreciably higher than in the States. Beef is forty kopeks per Russian pound (twelve ounces); black bread, five or six kopeks per pound; eggs, fifty cents per ten. But butter is scarce and not to be obtained in government shops at present. Private enterprises sell it at two and a half roubles per pound. Colonial products are exorbitant: one rouble for a lemon, forty kopeks for an orange. Colonial products are importations in Russia. Butter is being exported. Russia must export raw materials to pay for her imports. She pays in gold, her foreign credit being nil or nominal. Hence the scarcity at home of necessaries.

Capital being scarce, Russians are not permitted to carry money out of the country. Thus my friend was obliged to leave 400 roubles in Russia. Nor are Russians encouraged to go abroad much at present, because the Soviet government finds itself unable to supply its traveling nationals with foreign currency. Russian currency is so debased abroad—a rouble amounting to about thirty kopeks—that a Russian traveling must spend three to four times as much as he does at home.

As has been mentioned before, the foreign concessionaire is and has been Russia's particular pet and prime favorite. Labor-saving machinery, every sort of engineering genius, is Russia's greatest need. The country does not breed great mechanical genius, somehow. She must go abroad for it, and this means that too often she has been made the victim of sharp dealing or gross dishonesty.

Russia's basic tragedy is its sloth, gullibility, easy-going ways and cosmic procrastination. They have not yet learned to work, to stick to the task. They have been under foreign tutelage for centuries: German, French, Belgian. Not a railroad or a bridge, not a machine or a factory, has been achieved without foreign supervision and direction.

The Germans, Russia's nearest neighbors, who understand her best, have done very well for themselves in the Soviet republic. Many thoughtful Russians feel that the fate of the two nations, their future existence and continued prestige and prosperity, will become more and more fused as time passes. Russia's inexhaustible resources, her vast territory and great man power may thus ally itself with German industry, thoroughness and inventive genius.

At the same time there is a vast opportunity for Americans in Russia. Americans, in spite of rifts and provocations, are liked there, on the whole. Their mechanical, technical and organizing genius is greatly admired. If numbers of them could be induced to learn the rudiments of Russian, at least, and to acquaint themselves with the country's idiosyncrasies, great mutual benefit would result. At any rate, let Americans go there in numbers, and learn for themselves the aims and ideals of Soviet Russia. They are trying a Gargantuan experiment in the vast northern republic, and every little bit helps.

My friend, as has been stated, has decided to commute between the States and Russia for the time being. This is not possible for all Russian expatriates, however. Many of them were forced to waive their American citizenship to remain in Russia, as workers, teachers, etc. This, in spite of the fact that they came to the States as children, or young adolescents; have attended American public schools and colleges, and hold degrees. They were driven to drop their hard-earned American rights; their years of toil and privation, frequently downright starvation, for the right to earn their bread in Soviet Russia. The United States is adamant "in its two years' leave of absence for the naturalized American." And yet many naturalized Russians have formed an attachment for the land

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of their adoption. They shrink from a final break with it. Nor can they dismiss the land of their birth. They fled Russia years ago because of revolting, inhuman conditions. Now they wish to go back and do their bit; to visit, at least. A prolonged residence in the States ought to entitle the naturalized American to some consideration, such as free entry. Nor will Soviet Russia relent one iota in the matter. The "waiving of the American passport" need not amount to more than a gesture, if the American government will exercise a sense of justice and a sense of humor. The naturalized Russian would thus be rescued from his position between the devil and the deep sea.

If life is admittedly difficult and meagre, and very expensive, in the large Russian centres, at least there are compensations. One is freed from worry over the proverbial "rainy day" there. The unemployed are allowed a minimum pension and "free platform" (space, lodging). Thus, if they do not wallow in luxury, neither do they starve or become charity wards. Earnings are spent. A care-free tone prevails. The Damocles sword of unemployment, old age, sickness, does not hang over their heads. The care for tomorrow, which robs us of joy and peace, is minimized. One feels the country, the community back of one. There is a sharing of goods. Not a millennium nor a Nirvana—certainly not, but at least an attempt at economic care of the individual atom, the unit.

The Soviet government is not concerned with marriage per se. To be precise, the bourgeois code of "personal conduct and morals" is ignored in the Soviet republic. It matters not if couples are "registered" (married) or not registered; the authorities are supremely indifferent to the number and variety of a citizen's mates. Divorce is obtained for the asking, incompatibility, or plain ennui being a perfectly adequate ground.

It is the concrete result of marriage—the child—that interests and absorbs Soviet Russia. According to law one-third of a man's income goes to the child. And, as the whole consists of but three-thirds, a comrade's amorous activities are considerably cramped, whatever his natural bent. Because of the passport system, a father may not abandon his offspring and emigrate to another city or province. The authorities will find him, if he is not dead, and compel him to do his duty by his children. He cannot "disappear"; he cannot inflict his children on the state treasury and saunter away scotfree. It matters not if the child be born in a registered marriage, or in a free union. The mother's word as to paternity is always preferred. The man in the case has to furnish irrefutable proof of his "blamelessness." And he has to do some tall convincing if he hopes to move a Russian judge in a "paternity tangle."

The child is Russia's greatest care and chief concern at present. Childhood is made happy and profitable. Thus, in Saltikovka, fifteen miles from Moscow, a vast estate has been converted into a haven for factory workers' children. Certain Moscow factory workers have coöperated into a parents organization and turned Saltikovka into a children's retreat. The children are here self-governed, divided into groups and subgroups, each headed and led by a commander. Ages range from eight to sixteen. They live in tents and buildings amid natural surroundings, leading a healthy, outdoor life, not unlike our own Boy Scouts and campers. Outdoor activities are wisely tempered with instruction. They play and learn. Their bonfires and community singing attract the boys of summer vacationists. These "fortunate" boys of individual villas regard wistfully and enviously the doings of the workers' sons, and frequently end by joining them.

The tales about the "bezprizornye" (homeless) children are highly colored and largely fictitious. These orphans are children of parents killed or lost during the revolution, when the Communists were fighting for their life. They have acquired the vagrancy habit, not unlike our own incurable tramps. But they are being gathered and placed in homes—real, genuine homes with none of the flavor of charity or patronage about them. Not a few of what is left of the "bezprizornye" children are purely and simply runaway children. These prefer the untrammeled freedom of vagrancy to school and home discipline. In the south, near Odessa, is a city of "bezprizornye" children. It is self-governed. Adults are admitted by special permission, not otherwise. Here the "homeless" children are self-supporting, manufacturing soap, handkerchiefs and other items.

Communist youth of both sexes have an almost morbid curiosity as to the States. Every scrap of American news is eagerly sought and heard, digested, ruminated and spread. The North American republic is at once the treasure island, the land of romance and miraculous, stupendous achievements, the admiration and idol, of Russian youth. To emulate America and eventually to resemble it is young Russia's fervent, passionate desire and chief craving.

According to those versed in Russian affairs, Russia is now engaged in developing her heavy, primary, fundamental industries—electric power, mining, and the construction of heavy machinery. The Butilov works in Leningrad are merely one of many machinery-building agencies. Soviet Russia wishes to be entirely free from foreign technical and mechanical domination. For this reason she refuses to devote and divert men and machinery to manufacturing luxuries: silk underwear, silk stockings, fripperies and finery. Instead, she is training every resource to achieve electric motor power on a vast, national scale in order to drive the immense machinery of the near future. She is at present developing basic needs.

The Soviet's chief and primary problem is the human equation: individual appetites versus the common good. And this is the difficulty and rock, and snag of every government, ism, ology, scheme, plan, and hope for betterment.

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CONCERNING LITTLE CITIES

By LOUIS GOLDING

IT IS distressing to disagree with the eminent Ford Madox Ford, who believes that New York is not America and wrote a book to tell us so. My journeys in the States convince me that if America is not New York, it is trying very hard to be. The peculiar and inalienable charm of a Charleston, a Boston, a New Orleans, is being sedulously preserved. But the vital elements of these cities are more and more New York. Houston, Texas, not less than Tulsa, Oklahoma, are small sections of this avenue or that avenue, set down in the wilderness. There are no little cities left in America, or few. There are only little New Yorks.

In England, too, we have seen clearly in our own days that sure, swift process by which the great towns have stalked from their fastnesses and holding high their banners of smoke, have set foot on green fields, stormed the hills, methodically invested the farther valleys. Wheat bows the head. Orchards are despoiled. The dispossessed birds waver into diminished solitudes. Shall the day come when from shore to shore the tentacular towns shall have so seized the land that green grass is cultivated curiously within railings; that where beaver and fox, hare and squirrel once lived, only the grey cat slinks stealthily? For after all, England is so small a country. There is so little space between shore and shore. Who knows? Perhaps the day of the great towns draws to an end. Perhaps, as war has made them the exposed nerves of a nation, peace, extracting from a stone more power than a hundred coal-galleries, will obliterate them, to leave room for the essential genius of England, the little cities.

But the traveler, who knows something of the spirit of the English little cities, need not despair. Still hidden in the folds of the yellow hills, still slumbering by the side of far estuaries, still quiet behind woods in great lonely flatlands, the little cities live. They are far from smoke and clamors. They are guarded securely by poetry, and bells wrap them with magic. Their tiny towers hover benevolently over the laughter of children. Cows amble through their streets to pasture. Cocks are audacious, dogs friendly. The linen of the women is white as the milk they churn. The eyes of the men are blue and their brows broad as the sky that instructs them in their sowing and reaping.

The little cities of England hark back to no Roman memories. They are not placed on those great roads which run inexorably as a vendetta. Their masonry is built not to defy the weather, like an enemy, but to be colored with it, mellowed, like a friend. The little cities have no truck with industrial revolutions. Their low rooms are ashimmer with lamplight, not vacuous with the blank eye of the electric globe. If you shall place them in time at all (and like their own elms, like the Parthenon, like Provence, they seem to be part of the world's beauty, unconditioned by time) they are of the Gothic mood. For one would think that such nightmares as the spirit is heir to have been exorcised by the thaumaturgic craftsmen of the middle-ages, who have petrified them into gargoyles and cornices and arranged them along the edges of Holy Church to extract from them their last, least efficacy. Their streets are twisted like the philosophy of the schoolmen. What is most exalted in the saint and most frail in the human meet here and are reconciled.

And yet the little cities do not wholly need Gothic stone and cobbled streets to achieve this lovely seclusion of the spirit. For the spirit of the little city has reached kindly hands to me by the grey west waters and beyond the Grampian buttresses. Once in the heart of a black town which had been a little city long ago, an old memory was evoked at evening, when the sky was calm after much rain, and the ghost of the dead sweetness flitted for a time from factory gate to gate and sank once more.

Almost the most sainted to me of my little cities is Wem, in the West Country. I came down from the hills thither, the hills where proud Caradoc walks unappeased. There was mist over the quaint houses, over a dim hulk of stone. "In Wem," I murmured—

> In Wem, in Shropshire, is lapwings' wings,
> And misty castles and rootless hills.
> And there is balm for all your ills.
> In Wem, in Shropshire, when blackbird sings.

For Shropshire is an intermediate country, where no things are clearly defined, alive with echoes of dead wars not decided, where the names of little cities are tiny melancholy bells—Clun, Wem, Clun, Wem. There was an enchantment which held me there and holds me there still.

> Time is most very still in Wem,
> The men and women are old and sage;
> The little children do not age.
> There is a spell cast over them.

In Gloucestershire, in Somersetshire, the little cities are set among the slopes of corn. Here bees buzz all day about the good wine in scarlet clover. Here the chiffchaff chirps and the missel-thrush is singularly bad-tempered, and starlings, like Irishmen, are eloquent of their wrongs. Yet there are times when the air is not void of the clang of stirrup and steel. Knightly huzzas pass westward with the wind. For the Round Table has not discovered the Grail.

I go northward to Scotland where Bendhui stands

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at the head of the Dornoch estuary. I remember how Bendhui was shaken to her roots to learn that a company of real London entertainers intended to amuse Bendhui from the vantage of a traveling theatre. A caravan was erected and a sophisticated young gentleman, assisted by two sophisticated young ladies, proceeded to be mirthful, musical and languishing. They gave extracts from a performance described as "Chu Chin Chow, the latest revue from the Adelphi Theatre in Shaftesbury Circus." The citizens of the little city made an open-mouthed semicircle. At their centre stood the nonagenarian Hector the Flesher, arched over his staff, absorbing incredulously the so metropolitan wit. When the entertainers became amorous the three saffron-haired babies of Jeannie McLeod crowed and chuckled. When they became comical the three babies turned away their faces and wept with alarm. The minister passed along the road with eyes of cleric scorn. The dominie presided over his children who were taking notes for a composition. Hard by sparks and clangors issued from the smithy. Now and again cowherds disturbed the geometry of the semicircle with their shaggy northern beasts. A hedgehog, finding the evening advanced, moved rashly from his hedge. The sea-gulls shrieked windily, and a scuffling school fought over the caravan for a hunk of food. Sunset made of the estuary a channel of molten gold. The summits of Carn Vren shimmered and were like a grape, translucent purple. Over Strath Carron sunset fumed as over an alchemic cauldron. . . . The humor of the metropolitans grew thin, slackened, ceased. The peace of mountains and lonely waters came once more into the heart of the little city. A corncrake spoke from the wild pansies and the tangled vetch. An owl lifted a desultory hoot. The last plover wept and was quiet.

There are many little cities of which I do not know, and do not hope to know, the name. They themselves seemed so full of dreaming that one must pass through them as in a dream, asking nothing, stringing them on the threads of memory as "The Place of Singing Waters," "The City of Jolly Windows," "The City of Girls with Green Eyes." There is a little city in Yorkshire, somewhere beyond a place incredibly called Pocklington, Pinkton, of which I only know I entered it through tall, ivied gates of old brick. There is another where two apple trees grow on the green for the use of all children. There are also little cities wholly of the mind, whence no fashion can remove the page-boys clad in scarlet who follow the pompous masters of guilds, unwieldy with their robes and chains of gold.

It would be a goodly heaven if we should rise from our sleep to find there the bells of a little city unceasing, and periwinkles in the borders of our gardens, and swallows . . . and honey still for tea, and muffins. And strawberry jam, if you do not care for honey. Myself, I am all for honey. But I will not argue with any other about it.

THE CHURCH IN THE NAVY

By WILLIAM A. MAGUIRE

NEVER before in the history of the world has such a powerful fleet been gathered under one flag as that which, a few weeks ago, lay at anchor at the concentration of the American naval forces at Panama. This fleet is a city of many souls, with its problems of communication, transport, supply, pleasure and its prime business of war, worked out daily with a remarkable degree of efficiency. In it all there are 45,000 Americans, representing a typical cross-section of our population. Thirty percent of them are Catholics. There are some thirty navy chaplains, of whom three are priests. Only three.

The fervor of Americans for propagating the Faith has been the subject of merit and compliment for years. Our country boasts of a number of seminaries dedicated to the education of priests for foreign lands. Even the Sunday-school child has an interest in China and India. But while grown America is dispensing from her front door a lively interest, education, priests and nuns to the hungry far East, a hungrier child of her own, our navy, pines for the crumbs at the back door.

The fleet so recently concentrated is composed of the combined forces of the east and west coasts. There are fourteen dreadnaughts, eighty destroyers and their mother ships, scores of cruisers, submarines, tenders, mine-layers, tankers and tugs. There are two airplane carriers, each carrying over twenty-one hundred men. There are two hospital ships where men are sick, convalescing and dying. This parish of colossal proportions is taken care of by three priests. On Sunday morning, each celebrates his Mass aboard a battle-ship, his own particular parish of 1,300 men. The altar, festooned with ship's flags, is set on the quarter deck. The indifferent Catholic of our cities at home could watch with profit and personal chagrin, boats from nearby ships carrying Catholic boys to Mass.

Withal, there is a sense of helplessness and incompletion. Thousands of men have not attended Mass—4,000 on the airplane carriers alone. These American boys, who a few months or years before walked but a few city blocks to Mass, have not now the opportunity of keeping their faith strong because their priests have not followed them to this frontier of the navy. Months turn into years without their attending Mass; indifference takes its toll. Priests followed our men to France at the sound of war drums. One might ask whether the mission of a priest among men is not quite the same during the piping times of peace.

When, recently, the chaplains of the fleet were in conference in Panama, a Protestant chaplain took the floor. He moved to inform the Catholic press that it was the sense of the Protestant chaplains of the fleet that it is regrettable that the number of Catholic priests in the service is not at all adequate to the needs of the Catholic men. This sentiment is a far cry from the sorry competition among Christian denominations which is historical and current in America. It is becoming a common experience to be asked why there are so few priests in the service; why the Catholic Church should apparently neglect this child of our nation. In this navy of 96,000 men, not including the important number of wives and children, there are ten priests of America's 20,000.

The routine whereby a priest enters the navy as a chaplain is not generally known. The army and navy comprise the military diocese of America, whose chaplain bishop is His Eminence, Patrick Cardinal Hayes. His vicar-general is Monsignor George Waring, of Saint Ann's parish, New York.

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A priest first procures his bishop's permission to enter the service. This is the most difficult step, a condition that is natural but unfortunate. A bishop has contributed financially toward the education of a priest; has plans for his use; depends on him for a definite work. The navy and its needs are distant and of a lesser interest to an inland bishop. He regards the military diocese as the particular worry of the chaplain bishop, not realizing that he has a religious-patriotic duty to supply the human factors with which the chaplain bishop may carry on his work. It does not occur to the bishop or archbishop of a large city that in the navy there may be six or seven thousand Catholics from his own diocese.

The bishop having given his permission to an interested priest, it is necessary that the latter be acceptable for the service to Cardinal Hayes. Then he must qualify physically and intellectually at the Navy Department in Washington before he receives his commission as an officer of the navy. With that he enters a peculiar missionary field. He is free and unhampered in his zeal, and finds himself a powerful instrument in the education of non-Catholic Americans. A great part of his work has to do with them. They come to depend on him, to trust in him with a faith equal to that of the Catholic men. This fertile condition is due in large part to the pioneer work of those zealous sailor-priests, Fathers Parks, Gleeson and Reaney and Monsignor Chidwick. It is a tribute to our navy priesthood that the names of all these are frequently mentioned in praise and appreciation on our ships today.

In 1919 the battleship Idaho was ordered to convey the President of Brazil to his home country. On arriving at Rio de Janeiro it was besieged by curious visitors. Their amazement at the largest battle-ship they had ever seen was overshadowed by their surprise when they discovered that the Idaho's only chaplain was a Catholic priest. It was appalling that Protestant America should assign a Catholic priest to her newest battle-ship! The papal nuncio and many of the Brazilian clergy attended a reception on board and were elated to learn that daily Mass was celebrated there, and that an average of thirty men received Holy Communion. But the chaplain yearned to be free of the vagabond life of the service. He said as much to one of his Brazilian friends. The word reached the papal nuncio. He sent for the chaplain. He pointed out that someone had to do this work, and that in his opinion few priests in the world enjoyed such missionary opportunities as the navy chaplain. In a word, he convinced the writer of the need of priests of zeal and broad culture in this difficult and all-important field.

It is obvious that the navy needs today priests of the type the Holy Father sends on diplomatic missions to the enlightened capitals of the world. It is clear in the mind of the writer today that when he thought of quitting the navy ten years ago his decision was due to a subconscious yen for the comfortable atmosphere of a Catholic neighborhood.

It would be a blessing were some wealthy Catholics to establish scholarships in our seminaries for future chaplains. It would be easier then to recruit the right type of man for a career in the service. It would assure our navy men adequate religious ministrations. It would also free the chaplain of the thought that he might at any time be called upon to resign his commission and return to his diocese.

The writer has orders to proceed to the Asiatic station for duty with the destroyer squadrons. His congregation will be made up of American lads who are serving in our many ships that cruise the far eastern seas. He cannot feel that he is doing less than the missionary working among the natives.

THE TRIAL OF MRS. DENNETT

By EDWARD L. KEYES

(The following comment is introduced editorially on page 64 of this issue.—The Editors.)

MRS. MARY WARE DENNETT has been convicted by a New York jury of obscenity for sending through the mails a pamphlet which she had prepared twelve years ago for what she conceived to be the proper education in sex of her two fatherless boys. The effect upon the boys is not related, but it seems that she consulted various persons and by them was urged to publish the pamphlet on the score that it was an excellent presentation of the subject.

With publication came approval. The pamphlet is said to have been used as a text for some ten years in certain public schools and theological seminaries, and many copies of it have been distributed by branches of the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A. and similar organizations. As a result, a copy fell into an unsympathetic hand. Complaint and then trial followed, and finally conviction of obscenity. Mrs. Dennett has stood by her guns, and if her appeal fails of success she is said to purpose electing 300 days in jail rather than a $300 fine.

A permanent defense committee is now announced with various well-known names upon it and the American Civil Liberties Union on the outskirts. The committee has issued the following statement: "The purpose of this committee is to support the appeal of Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett from her conviction in the United States Court for sending her pamphlet of sex instruction through the mail. We consider that the principle at issue is that instruction of this type, conducted in a scientific and dignified manner, is not obscene and should be both permitted and encouraged.

"This committee, constituted to form a larger and more general committee, national in scope, is resolved to support this principle as well as to assist with the prosecution of Mrs. Dennett's appeal. Its duty, therefore, and that of the committee which shall supersede it, is to raise funds for the actual contest in the law courts and by dignified and restrained publicity to bring in, on the side of liberality and honest education, many thousands of American citizens, who, the committee believes, hold the same views.

"The committee is convinced that the defense of Mrs. Dennett must be carried through the courts by orderly judicial procedure and that every recourse to law must be exhausted on her behalf. Funds are now and will be necessary to carry on the legal contest. The outlay is, fortunately, reduced to only the barest expenses by the offer of Morris L. Ernst, Mrs. Dennett's counsel, to serve without fee."

Meanwhile the New Republic has published all the matter in the pamphlet excepting the anatomical illustrations and those few paragraphs upon which the legal stigma of obscenity has been placed.

Perusal of this expurgated document should satisfy anyone that Mrs. Dennett's intention as to the morals of children, when she wrote this pamphlet for them, was entirely honorable. If she had restricted the publication to a small audience, even those descriptions of physiological processes which have been objected to could at most have been classified as indiscreet. Objection is made to her approval of birth control, her minimizing the evil effects of autoerotic practices and her description of what the French term the "oeuvre de chair," especially since she grants that pleasure accompanies such acts.

It is quite probable that court action could have been eluded by a lighter touch upon these topics. Curiously enough, the

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most human and judicial newspaper comment upon the trial seems to have been that of the New Yorker which said in part: "The question was not of obscenity but of expediency. The offense, if any, was not criminal but editorial. The jurors shied mainly at one paragraph in the disputed sex pamphlet; they thought it should have been omitted or reworded. We have read the pamphlet and we agree with the jury, in part. But if juries are to wield an editorial pencil over the literature of this country, there should be devised some way of rendering editorial decisions other than the stupid, bungling, discouraging practice of convicting a lady of high crime simply because, in the opinion of the jury, she overwrites. If it was a question of editing Mrs. Dennett's pamphlet down a point or two for the benefit of the United States mails (which apparently it was) any city editor of any New York newspaper could have done more in three minutes than the absurd courts of this country did in hours of shameful wrangling in the presence of twelve men who were supposed to be pure because they hadn't read H. L. Mencken."

There is scarcely any need to make much of all this. There has been wringing of hands over the fate of the poor old widow but we are given to understand that the widow herself is not in sympathy with this morbid point of view. There has been some outcry as to the danger that the distribution of any pamphlet for the education of sex might be interfered with by this verdict. But surely this is not to be expected. Wide-eyed youngsters have had their curiosity stimulated for a day and portly old pragmatists have had their chuckle for an evening. Now the newspapers have turned to other themes and in a few days we shall have forgotten that The Sex Side of Life was prohibited the mails just as we have forgotten the condemnation of Tolstoy's Kreutzer Sonata.

This flurry is but another instance of an eternal truth. The difference between God and man is that God made man—and made him free.

Sea Lady

Who is the girl with the green scarf?

When she moves, a snaky gleam
Moves with her in sinuous stream
As of molten silver down
The slight limbs: a cruel gown
Molded to the crueler flesh
Under the metallic mesh.
Her hair glitters. Is it wet
Dripping from the sea-cave yet?
Wakened when a salty spark
Whispers through those twisted dark
Coils of sleekened violet?

Who is she? Dare I say who?
She is from a schooner's hold
Down along the India Wharf.
Twenty leagues were sifted through
The deep-combing hungry seine,
Twenty leagues almost in vain,
When—a little less than gold—
Snaky in her quivering scales
In among the mackerel tails
Tangled in the sullen net
There she lay . . . I saw her so . . .

Who is she? No one I know.

GRACE HAZARD CONKLING.

COMMUNICATIONS

A NEW SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN ARTS

Atchison, Kan.

TO the Editor:—Dr. Ralph Adams Cram's plea, in the December 19 issue of The Commonweal, for the establishment of a school of Christian arts, and the subsequent communications from Mr. Lavanoux and from Mr. Harman, would indicate that the cause of Christian artistic expression is not without ardent and authoritative advocates even in traditionless America. And can the interested reader be censured who asks himself if these gentlemen may not be the unconscious spokesmen of a widespread and gradually increasing American interest in the purely Christian expression of art? Of an interest of already substantial proportions—though as yet unconcerted: springing from innumerable unheralded groups of earnest lovers of Christian art, who, ignorant of the efforts of the other groups, are striving single-handed for the attainment of their vision?

Surely this is not an impossible conjecture. For there is, as Dr. Cram mentions, in commercially prosperous America an extensive, concerted and admirable development of certain of the secular arts. Is it not true that Catholics are working hand in hand with non-Catholics in this movement? Moreover, the Church in America has at last and only very recently emerged from the pioneer state. In consideration of this development of artistic appreciation, this increased prosperity, this fuller religious life, is a mighty renaissance in ecclesiastical art improbable? But this movement—if movement it is—consists in a series of detached, isolated groups. There is need of a clearing-house for the dreams of this American school of the Christian arts in order that the efforts may be concerted and mutual encouragement and assistance accrue.

It has been my privilege during the three years I have been a student at the college conducted by the monks of Saint Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas, to observe the beginning of the material realization of just such a dream. Saint Benedict's is young as Benedictine abbeys go—seventy years; and already it numbers 100 members. It, too, has just emerged from the pioneer stage. And, with the coming of a fuller monastic life, have come the same impulses that stirred the eleventh-century abbeys—the now traditional Benedictine desire for artistic expression, a spirit that must lurk in the solemn tones of the chanted hours.

This little community in the very heart of the mundane Middle-West has conceived a stupendous dream—a dream of which the first material expression is just now taking shape. This fact has occasioned the first public intimation of the true proportions of the dream.

The dream's material corner-stone is the partially completed Gothic monastery that is being built on the high bluffs overlooking the Missouri. This building, of native blue limestone embellished with white Carthage stone, is an eminently correct, though severe, adaptation of perpendicular Gothic. When finished the building will form a giant letter E. Only the back and northern arm of the E (containing the cells, calefactories, refectory, kitchens, infirmary, chapter house and novitiate) is to be completed at present. The library and guest wing (the southern arm of the E) and the abbey church (central arm) will be begun as soon as resources permit. The church, which will approximate in size the famous Tintern Abbey church, will be the gem of the group.

In this monastery, whose every stone is reminiscent of the best traditions in ecclesiastical art, these Benedictines hope to

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develop a school that in time will include all the branches of Christian art—architecture, sculpture, painting, music, the designing and execution of sacred vessels, vestments, etc. Within the sheltering abbey walls the artists will gather their inspiration not merely by studying but by living the art of the Church. There is no richer, truer source of religious artistic inspiration than active participation in the life of the Church—through contact with a religious community and the daily enactment of the living drama of the liturgy. The school will be an asylum where monastic discipline and liturgical prayer are not archaeological curiosities but realities. In the abbey today all music is strictly Gregorian and daily, from matins until compline, the liturgy with all the solemnity and privileges of the abbatial rank is performed as punctiliously as love and study can effect and conditions permit.

The school is to be an American institution. The monks are gradually preparing and equipping themselves to assume the work of such a school whenever a favorable time and circumstances and ever-laggard funds shall allow, but the plan at present is to secure a certain number of artists and craftsmen from European abbeys and schools to supervise this school for a period after its formal opening.

This, then, is the dream; this the beginning—further evidence that there is an awakened appreciation of the importance of ecclesiastical art in America. May the publication of such dreams as Dr. Cram's and this one, under the patronage of The Commonweal, inspire both the connoisseurs and the amateurs and even those of us who are less than amateurs, mere admirers, to raise the sooner a shout of "Deus vult" for a modern defense and restoration of a sacred custody!

BRENDAN MCCORMACK.

LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

Rio Vista, Cal.

TO the Editor:—This is to take respectful exception to a statement made in the editorial columns of The Commonweal recently. In reading those columns, the present writer went along, column-inch, after column-inch, article after article, page after page, agreeing or at least not disagreeing with the writer of them, until the very end, where, under the heading, Literature for Children, it was said: " . . . Show us the lad of eight who will not respond to a proper recital of 'The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew, the furrow followed free; we were the first that ever burst into that silent sea,' and we will show you one who is not interested in swimming or baseball." Right there we parted, for I am convinced that therein those columns erred.

The disputed statement is a prime example of the analogies which are trustingly accepted and firmly believed in by most adults—even by most parents, whom experience should have wisened—regarding boys. Such analogies are false, in that they do not specify and are erroneously all-embracing. How uncomfortably do we squirm and how ferociously do we glare down from the lofty summit of adulthood at the normal lad, riding serenely along and tumbling our wise sayings about our ears, one after another, as he goes!

I can show you any one of twenty-five or thirty youngsters of the above-stated age, whose total lack of response to Mr. Coleridge's singing alliterations might seem appalling, but who are, in spite of that dreadful lack of artistic appreciation, excellent shortstops and outfielders for their age, who can run 100 yards in thirteen seconds or swim the same distance on their backs—not to mention the ability to gain considerable distance by kicking a football, or to take a well-directed boxing glove on the chin with little unseemly crying.

We may possibly disagree on just what constitutes a "proper recital" and again on the finer shades of meaning of the word "respond." Yet I am convinced that any sort of recital of the above or any other stanza of the Ancient Mariner (that particular piece because the questioned article mentioned it, and for no other reason) will elicit, if anything besides a bored attention or a blank stare, a most surprisingly ungratifying response, from any group of normal boys, eight to twelve years of age. "That old classical junk," is, I fear, about the sum total of most juvenile responsiveness in that direction.

Dr. Bruner no doubt can prove me entirely wrong with any number of theories. As far as class-rooms are concerned I am not a teacher, nor do I know aught of "ideal pupils." But of all the boys I have met and lived with during the past few years—all normal and average, a few above—one may expect appreciation of literature, as such, and then only an appreciation of sorts, in the ninth grade and above. I am, you see, in a position where boys are apt to be entirely honest with me.

"Apage," then, to maxims and morals and analogies about boys, until we are able, through knowledge, to judge the worth of these sayings, and to know whereof we speak. Boys cannot be led, guided, driven or understood through such agencies, be the subject literature, athletics, morals or religion. When one has learned to accept boys as individuals, containing the seeds of tastes and thoughts and desires that will later grow according to the preparation of the ground; each different, never to be measured, as a class, by adult maxims nor condemned by adult analogies—then, and not until then, has one gained a position from whence one may hope to impart to a boy a little of what is known to be desirable for him.

ALAN DRADY.

THE FEDERAL RESERVE

Chestnut Hill, Pa.

TO the Editor:—Being a subscriber and a banker, I think it only proper to call your attention to a very deplorable error on page 639, second column, in your issue of April 10, 1929. "The Federal Reserve Board not only advanced the call loan rate to 20 percent," etc.

Neither the Federal Reserve Board nor the New York Federal have anything to do with the call-loan rate in Wall Street or elsewhere. The call rate, or the demand for demand money, is generally fixed by a group of the largest banks, which are, of course, in very close touch with funds that flow to and from New York.

The Federal rate (New York) is still at 5 percent to member banks, but this applies only to paper offered by member banks, or paper supported by the United States government paper. Such paper is eligible, running for ninety days or less. The Federal Board's weakness at present is their inability to control funds placed on call by great corporations, which, in order to supplement their profits, lend at call (temporary funds) at the money post in the New York Stock Exchange. Mr. Mitchell in a moment of advertising delirium did offer $25,000,000, but only at 17, 18 and 20 percent, which did not have the effect of lowering the rate to 8 percent. Mr. Mitchell, I think, made an awful blunder and for which his directors *did* reward him by electing a new man for his job.

EUGENE J. MORRIS,
Vice-President, Quaker City National Bank.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Grand Street Follies

THE Grand Street Follies have not quite graduated from their once naive estate into the full sophistication of a Broadway review, and the transition period is not as diverting as it might be. If you recall the days when these Follies were really exhibited on Grand Street, and when they represented the vociferous explosion of young artists devoted for the long winter months to Dramatic Art (heavily capitalized) you will remember that while the wit and humor were seldom, of themselves, naive, the whole point of the evening was to be found in the play-boy attitude of the actors. They were bubbling over with the delight of being let loose from the winter's Higher Aims, and were bent on spoofing New York's more pretentious shows for all they were worth.

Then came the war—no (I must have been reading J. W. Krutch's latest book on modern distemper!) not the war, but the parting of the ways between the Lewisohn sisters who had long paid the Grand Street deficit and the other half of the Neighborhood Playhouse which consisted of Agnes Morgan (not, I believe, a sister of Helen Morgan) and Helen Arthur. It was a sad parting in more ways than one, because it divorced two elements in the theatre which had complemented each other to good effect for years. In the outmoded language of Professor Jung, the Lewisohns were the introverted and the other two the extroverted side of a balanced combination. One side of the house was intensely thoughtful and occasionally gay, the other side was light-heartedly energetic and occasionally thoughtful. When the two moods or attitudes met, the result was apt to be something as surpassingly fine as The Dybbuk or as tenderly poetical as The Little Clay Cart, or (which is the point of this brief history) as excruciatingly funny as the early Grand Street Follies. Today the Lewisohn sisters are devoting themselves exclusively to the search for New Art (with consequences noted below on this page) and Miss Morgan and Miss Arthur, with the nucleus of the old Neighborhood group, have become the Actor-Managers and the sole custodians of the Follies. Their efforts to select and produce plays as well worked none too brilliantly. The Follies are their great moment.

This glance backward would be quite unnecessary if it were not needed to explain a curious lack in the present Follies. The work of individuals in the group shows no abatement in quality. The general pattern of the show is still the same —a faint continuity as an excuse for viewing current plays from a bizarre angle—and the satire is still keen when it does not degenerate into an anaemic attempt at being Rabelaisian. What is lacking chiefly is the inner exuberance which came from the annual spring reaction against consecration to Art. Not that the Lewisohns themselves ever held aloof from the fun. On the contrary, one of them sometimes donned wig and costume and joined in. But the whole company seemed formerly to use the serious days of winter as a spring-board from which to leap off. Now they simply dive in from a flat shore, which means that the effort to repeat the mental abandon of former years is a bit synthetic.

A Broadway playhouse has done its share, too, in hardening a once flexible spirit. Competition has forced gilding where none was needed. The present Follies have many of the scenic trappings of the more intimate Broadway reviews, and there is even an attempt to provide a small but comely chorus of dancers. There is nothing wrong in either fact. The Follies of the past have been as short on looks as they were long on skill and wit. But in the attempt to climb to Broadway standards they have reached only a middle rung. The dancing chorus is only fair, and does not live up to the promise of the new scenic standards. As a total production, the current show is (following the lament of the Hoboken heroine) "neither maid, wife nor widow."

On the other hand, no synthetic mixture of atmospheres can ever dim the brilliancy of such individual performances as those of Paula Trueman, Dorothy Sands and Albert Carroll. I am inclined to rank Albert Carroll's take-off of Constance Collier in Serena Blandish as the best job I have ever seen him do, with the possible exception of his Mrs. Fiske. I say this because it stands for the most complete change of inner personality as well as outer resemblance. Miss Trueman is a little too harsh and staccato to give the complete illusion of Ruth Gordon in the same sketch. But in another sketch, which is not even an attempt at impersonation, her disclosure of milady's deceptive toilette in the Age of Innocence is as sly and malicious a bit of comedy as the best pantomime of Charlie Chaplin.

Dorothy Sands has happily devoted herself to famous modern vampires (of the stage) such as Irene Bordoni and Lenore Ulric. The result is highly gratifying if you really want to see the tricks of those entertainers exposed to grim and merciless dissection. As to Miss Morgan's sketches, they are still inclined to take the easiest way—that is, to depend more on a risqué point than on real wit, and most of them are much, much too long. The unexpected almost never happens until it is too late to be unexpected. But—to repeat—the real trouble lies deeper. Something was lost between Grand Street and Broadway, and what Broadway has added is not what the old Grand Street days supplied. (At the Booth Theatre.)

The Search for New Art

THE partial vacuum in the Grand Street Follies is matched by a similar lack of balance in the efforts of the Lewisohn sisters to create a new art which shall be a combination of music and the dance. With the help of Mr. Sokoloff's orchestra, and on the vast stage of the Manhattan Opera House, they have attempted this year to give a visual interpretation through dance and settings of Strauss's Heldenleben. There is a theory (which only time can establish as valid) that dance and pantomime can be brought to a perfection which will permit them to supplement and, in a sense, complete the images and emotions evoked by a great tone poem. Personally I feel that the effort must fail, not only along the lines of the Lewisohns' present endeavors, but along any other line which is primarily synthetic. Music of the tone-poem variety, which is intended to evoke images and to tell a story through the emotions, is a distinct medium. It cannot be interpreted by scenery and the dance without limiting the vision it is intended to bring before us. On the other hand, when music is written in the first place with the intention of subserving the dance, the two media blend. Perhaps the best illustrative comparison I can give is that of a sonata written for violin and piano. A blending of the two instruments is intended, and they do

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blend. But if some enterprising violinist should take a piano concerto, and by picking out certain themes, superimpose a violin score, the result would be to stultify the effect of the piano without creating a satisfactory theme for the violin. If there is ever to be a rich blending of music and the dance, passing beyond the scope of the older ballets, the two media must be conceived together in the first instance. Instead of one becoming the "interpretation" of the other, both must combine from the outset to interpret a single great thought or emotional experience. Otherwise one will continue merely to limit the other.

It is precisely in the inability to realize this rather obvious necessity that the Lewisohns seem to work less well alone than in the older association at the Neighborhood Playhouse. The "lyric dramas" formerly given on Grand Street were less ambitious, and, to that extent, more successful. They approximated the older forms of ballet. The present attempts seem to soar above realities, and in the intense effort to realize something "new," to neglect the slow processes by which a new form of art, or a union of older forms, must evolve. It is perhaps ungracious to speak this way of efforts that have only the highest motives and that are, in their way, inspiring as adventures. But sometimes the most friendly act is to tell a mariner that you see rocks ahead of him, even if it turns out later that the rocks are all in your own imagination. I do not deny the possibility of combining the tone poem and the dance into lyric drama, but I do feel very strongly convinced that the combining must be done at the time the music is composed, and with the intention of making each medium supplement the other, and without permitting either one to be subordinated to or limited by the other. That is the only apparent way in which illusion can be created, instead of being partly achieved or wholly destroyed.

The Little Show

CLIFTON WEBB, Romney Brent and a number of other talented actors and actresses are grouped together in Messrs. Brady and Wiman's new intimate revue. The music is engaging, some of the sketches are excellent in their brevity, and the effect of lavish entertainment is provided with an astoundingly small cast and remarkably little scenic extravagance.

So far as the technique of the intimate revue goes, this is probably the most successful effort Broadway has seen since the first Charlot Revue of three or four seasons back. Unfortunately the themes of many of the sketches turn and twist about the supposedly fashionable immoralities of the day with that kind of grimace which is condoning rather than satirical. There is a vast difference between poking fun at human failings and winking at them. In healthier days, wit had its way with human nature without becoming nasty, and laughter made men strong. The wit of today apparently gives way to that same nature, and men grow flabby with titters. To laugh at vice is perhaps childish and irresponsible, but is very different from snickering with it. The healthiest sign of all is to find something more important and more reasonable to laugh about. (At the Music Box Theatre.)

The title page and index for Volume IX of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume IX in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of The Commonweal.

BOOKS

A Minority Report

The Impuritans, by Harvey Wickham. New York: The Dial Press. $3.50.

WHEN The Misbehaviorists appeared a year ago, some of us naive optimists hoped that Mr. Wickham's inspired irony might succeed in attaining what John Dryden long ago defined as the true end of satire: the amendment of vices by correction. Here was a champion of common sense, attacking the most palpable stupidities, inconsistencies, blindnesses and blasphemies in those fashionable gospels of clever and ignorant materialism preached by Drs. Watson, Freud, Wiggam, Will Durant and their tribe; attacking them, too, with fiercer, sharper, gayer weapons than their own, with a more agile and intelligent wit, and occasionally with extremely amiable clowning.

It now appears that Mr. Wickham awakens full appreciation in one particular and well-defined minority. He does not appeal to that good, sedate multitude which forms the backbone of literate society. The majority is slow to follow the man who deals cleverly in novelties; it distrusts learning and sophistication. Nor does Mr. Wickham attract the more active, curious and vocal little market-place groups; they prefer the prophets who give more encouragement to their impulses and level fewer exactions upon their logical faculties. His audience is a relatively minute group, after all: it consists of those few radicals (I use the word in its literal and complimentary sense) who are curious enough to be interested and amused by popular current speculations and who are yet sober enough to prefer wit to half-wit.

At any rate, Mr. Wickham's minority now joyfully observes that he apparently finds it worth producing another and similar book, and that his delightful verbal gifts have not forsaken him. His title is again a happy one. He adds "zero-worshipers" and "cold-worldliness" to our small vocabulary of acceptable puns. And again his subjects are drawn from the popular idols of the unintelligentsia.

The late and tedious Otto Weininger, who was the unsung prophet of the new school of sex, is carefully dissected, exposed, dried up and puffed away by a rigid and restrained scientific analysis. Here Mr. Wickham demonstrates that he also can be terribly grave and exact, at the expense of being slightly boring, like his subject. This clears the way for the more lively disposal of Edward Carpenter, and of Havelock Ellis, "that gentle, soft-hearted, and not very hard-headed old patriarch," whose desire was always "rather to see others eat than to do trencher work at the banquet himself. . . . Having raised a splendid set of aboriginal whiskers, he entered upon his literary career moved by a passionate hatred of all laws and customs tending to put the slightest restraint upon impulse, the sex impulse more especially."

Mr. Wickham notes that James Branch Cabell describes the infamy of Judas as "the reply of a very fine poet to heaven's proffered truce"; that Nero is described as another "fine poet" since he could get peace of mind from the satiating of no lust, howsoever delicate or brutal, but hungered only for Agrippina, his mother, whose belly he ripped open "so that he might see the womb in which he had once lain." Says Mr. Wickham, "One begins to understand Cabell's idea of a poet."

Then to Marcel Proust, in whose interminable novels we hear everywhere of inversion, perversion and subversion, of atmosphere, of art. "There is no longer any talk of truth.

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So we jump from facts to fancies—the more wildly confused, the better. Abandoned is the attempt to have the slightest real knowledge or understanding of anything. Emotion is all that is asked for—emotion, no matter how awakened or what sort of an emotion it may be. Is not emotion enough?"

On to James Joyce, who writes "Miss gaze of Kennedy" for "the gaze of Miss Kennedy" and is hailed by the gullible as the Homer of our age. "The author," says Mr. Wickham, after exposing Joyce's absurd sentimentality, "tries to appear nonchalant by piecing a few sentences, but we have him now. Sophistication? Merely dung-dust upon an Abie's Irish Rose." For good measure, Mr. Wickham casts his summing-up in the form of an excellent parody of the style of Ulysses.

Finally to D. H. Lawrence, whose beloved Indians are so superior to us because the essence of their being is seated in the abdomen: "the gut is more noble than the brain." "Indians that I have met," declares Mr. Wickham, "are not quite so intestinal as those with whom Mr. Lawrence seems to be acquainted. Real Indians, as a matter of fact, no more think with their guts than we do. But what if they did? Then certainly their way of consciousness would be fatal to ours. And what ought we to do about it? See to it that the non-human, without words or vision, lays no strangling hold upon the creature who sees and speaks? No, says Mr. Lawrence in effect, white meat should give way to dark. 'The mind is merely a servant. The mind bows down before the creative mystery.' Here is what one might call a 'beautiful' confusion of thought. Certainly the mind is an instrument. Certainly it should bow down before the creative mystery. But the creative mystery has somehow fallen to the foot of the class, the dunce instructs the teacher."

The temptation to go on quoting Mr. Wickham is a strong one. But even a large collection of brief bits from his book would probably fail to indicate his real formidability. He is cogent because of his essential soundness rather than because of his wit. When he points out the fallacy of inferring that the Greeks were great because they were pagan from the fact that they happened to be both great and pagan, he is at his best. And he is fair—another thing that might make his opponents gnash their teeth. He is fair enough even to give credit to the undeniable swiftness of the final section of reverie in Ulysses. We hope that he will long continue to chastise those modern unintellectual literary tramps and camp-followers whom Mr. Aldous Huxley once had the sense to call Messrs. Blight, Mildew and Smut.

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

The Citizens New Panacea

The New Citizenship, by Seba Eldridge. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $2.50.

THERE can be no doubt that Professor Eldridge is correct in his assertion that Mr. or Miss or Mrs. Average Citizen knows little of governmental affairs or policies, cares even less, and moves along on the assumption that the flag is still there, no matter what happens. Professor Eldridge is right, too, in believing that the schools and colleges can do more than they are at present doing in stirring up an intelligent interest in current political, social and economic problems. In his eagerness, however, to get to his own panacea for our public ills, the author does not give sufficient credit where credit is manifestly due. He takes up all the modern devices for reform in governmental machinery, such as the city manager, the direct primary, the short ballot, the initiative and referendum, home rule and so on, considers them and decides that although they give some help, it is not much.

Granting that there is no salvation in the institution of a new piece of governmental machinery as such, we must nevertheless admit that certain types of machinery are simpler of operation than others and are more understandable to the public mind. Such, in fact, is the manager form of government which, while passing through many vicissitudes in some cities, has awakened a remarkable public interest in municipal affairs and has invariably resulted in an improvement in munici-

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There are many fine Catholic schools and camps announced in the June issue of *The Red Book Magazine,* which are personally known to us through our years of systematic school and camp visiting. They are glad to send catalogues and answer letters from parents.

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If you have any difficulty in finding a school or camp which accords with your ideals or requirements, let us help you from our experience. We are college women who specialize in personalized school and camp information. There is no charge for this information which is maintained as a great magazine's service to the American family. A personal interview will be welcome or you may use the coupon or write stating clearly all the factors that will govern your choice of a school or camp. Ask for a free copy of our booklets, "Guide to Camps," and "Guide to Private Schools."

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pal administration. Municipal home rule, too, has been a decided aid to civic education and to the improvement in general citizenship. In fact it must be very definitely asserted that these various reforms are the outward evidence of an increased public spirit and enlightenment. There is far less apathy in the face of public wrong-doing and corruption today than there was in the late sixties and early seventies of the last century. Although we have not reached the millennium in government and politics, we have improved.

It may or it may not be lamentable that people do not vote in greater numbers. If there are issues, however, there will always be votes. Witness the great outpouring of voting citizens in the last national primary in New York City, in the famous "pineapple primary" of Chicago, and in the last national election. Yet it is only fair to say that it is not simply a large number of voters but a large number of intelligent voters that Professor Eldridge is looking for.

After we run along with the author repeating more breathlessly as we go "Yes, yes, go on" and "Where do we go from here?" and looking forward to the solution which we think will never be propounded, we come at last to the grand plan. Perhaps we have expected too much; but it must be admitted that the new public order leaves us rather chilly. The citizen of the future is to give two hours every day to a consideration of public questions. He is to be a member of a neighborhood group. The group will convene at a neighborhood centre and revel in the discussion of public affairs under a competent leader. Out of this group, as from a cocoon, the new citizen will break forth on civic wings. There is also considerable discussion of tests, psychological and otherwise, for the new citizen. Now this plan may make a special appeal to the sociologist, and perhaps to others, but it may safely be asserted that the number of political scientists who on reading it will sink back in their professorial chairs and sigh "Cui bono?" will be ever so many.

Incidentally, good Christian citizens may be interested in the following selections: "They [the Church and the neighborhood] divert attention from community problems, for in themselves they make but little contribution, directly or indirectly, to the treatment of those problems." "The Church . . . contributes comparatively little to the solution of moral problems raised by changing social conditions." "It [the Church] would be adjudged, on an impartial appraisal, a civic liability . . . more than any other factor in American life, with the possible exception of race. . . . It divides the community into mutually exclusive groups." And, therefore, "the contemplated organization of citizens might indeed be conceived as a sort of modern secular analogue of the Church, and *even as its possible successor.*" (The italics and the amusement are mine.)

JEROME G. KERWIN.

The Nobile Adventure

The Arctic Rescue, by Einar Lundborg. New York: The Viking Press. $3.00.

READ against a background which no devoted follower of the newspapers can fail to bring to it, there is no story so pathetic as this of Einar Lundborg's in the very considerable literature of Arctic exploration. Expeditions to the North failed before the Italia went to pieces, and resulted in tragedy, but the failure and the tragedy were on a heroic scale. Only into the history of the dirigible have come details of such a petty character as to make it a subject for indignation rather than respect or gratitude.

Of course it is ridiculous to place the blame entirely on General Nobile. To some extent, undoubtedly, he has been made a scapegoat, and one has the impression, perhaps unreliable, that Captain Lundborg would like to say a few hot words about certain eminent Italians who are much more necessary to the government than the designer and pilot of dirigibles. Since he controls his indignation, however, we prefer his narrative to his controversy. And no less interesting than the story of the actual rescue are the contrasts of past and present which, unconsciously perhaps, creep into the author's tale. It was from Danes Island, for instance, that the Swedish engineer-aeronaut, Andrée, took off in 1897 in a magnificent balloon—the gas bag measured twenty meters in diameter—and sailed away toward the Pole at twenty miles an hour; in 1928 Lundborg took off from practically the same spot in a perfectly equipped Fokker at a speed greater than a hundred miles an hour, to the rescue of a stranded dirigible crew. Andrée unfortunately crashed, and was never seen again; the crew of the Italia, from their camp on the icy wastes, called the attention of the world to their plight by means of the radio. The planes engaged in the hunt for Nobile and his men, responding to this radio call, flew almost daily over the mountains of Northwest Land and the glacier that is Northeast Land—Conway and Nordenskiold spent several arduous years exploring only small parts of these regions.

In The Arctic Rescue Captain Lundborg writes simply and vividly of his "greatest adventure," of his trials on the ice after his Fokker had overturned on his second landing at the Italia camp, of the dissensions that arose among the remaining survivors, of the insulting attitude of the officers and crew of the Cittá di Milano toward Nobile, and of the General's cold reception in Norway. But he is at his best when writing of Sweden and things and deeds Swedish; a strain of national pride crops out in his story again and again until it becomes almost a chant—a chant of praise for his country's efforts during this rescue work. It has the true ring.

WILLIAM L. ENGELS.

Tibetan Lore

The People of Tibet, by Sir Charles Bell. New York: The Oxford University Press. $7.00.

THE Indian civil service has been fortunate in that it has often produced good administrators who are also good linguists. Of this type is Sir Charles Bell, a man of unassuming character, but a student and precise observer, endowed with a nature as kindly as it is industrious. Fortunately for the world, the Indian government had the good sense to keep Sir Charles Bell in Asia for long years, nearly twenty of which were passed in Tibet. In this volume, with its twenty-seven chapters, two appendices, many photographs, three maps and small but carefully selected bibliography, there is ample evidence of his powers of observation and inquiry into the habits, customs and beliefs of these still secluded people.

The method by which this material was assembled is disclosed in the preface: "Such as I have garnered during a residence of nearly twenty years, I have obtained by speaking to them [Tibetans] in their own language, not through interpreters." The knowledge of the language, the capacity to inquire, has given us this absorbingly interesting narrative which deals with Tibet's peasants and nobility, woman and home customs, rites, amusements and commercial methods.

"On my way to Lhasa, I halted for two nights at Nan-Kar-Tse, [where] a small school adjoined . . . our bungalow.

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Each morning before sunrise the singsong commenced which showed that a reading lesson was in progress. It was winter, with a temperature of 40 to 50 degrees of frost." When traveling in Kansu, the reviewer came upon a similar scene in a school near Tung Kang Caves, where all the boys were seated on a kang, two feet above the ground, in rows, each child chanting the Analects of Confucius. This room had paper windows, no stove, no carpet, but the noise of reading, though loud, was not inharmonious.

A pleasing feature of this book is the use of sayings, quotations of poems, in English, giving often the transliterated pronunciation of the Tibetan words; in some places the actual Tibetan characters, as, for example, where the correct form of the oft-quoted, "Om mani pad me hum," is set out as it should be: "Om-mani-peh-me-hum-hri," being literally, "Oh, the Jewel in the Lotus Flower," meaning Buddha, the benign and sympathetic.

One wishes that the author had given more instances of Tibetan place-names, such as Pu-Sum—the Head of Three Valleys: being a place where three valleys meet. The geographical descriptions of this land of secluded peace, with its elevated plateaus about ten thousand feet and its vast mountain ranges, though compactly given, are si gularly suggestive of the causes of its isolation, and we shall hope for another volume from this author on the effect of Tibetan altitudes on Asiatic climate and habits, especially among the Mongols and in northern China. If it were presented in as pleasing a style as this volume on Tibet, it should enjoy wide popularity.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

A Prussian Queen

Queen Louise of Prussia, by Gertrude Aretz; translated from the German by Ruth Putnam. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.50.

THIS book could never have been published before the war. At that time the legend of Queen Louise was one of the few things which no one would have attempted to shake. She was thought of as something beautiful, noble and wonderful, something almost more than human. Miss Aretz presents us quite a different picture of the unfortunate Queen, and a far more human one. She shows us a charming woman married to a man entirely inferior to herself, a woman capable of being led astray but conquering herself and her feelings before it is too late, a good as well as an attractive woman, but one whose sometimes foolish conduct brings to mind the famous French aphorism: "Behind every feminine opinion one finds a personality."

Louise found hers in the person of the Czar Alexander I of Russia, and it cannot be denied that from the German, or rather from the Prussian, point of view, his influence over her brought about disastrous results. It is these results to which the author of this new biography alludes when she says that the Queen "had to part from life, perhaps conscious that she was not entirely blameless for the miseries that had come upon her land and people."

At the same time, Miss Aretz tries not so much to excuse Louise for errors which almost any other woman in the same difficult position would have been led into, but to give us a picture of her heroine which is drawn without prejudice, and as such, cannot fail to enlist interest and sympathy. The extracts which we are given out of the Queen's correspondence add very much to the impression of her charm, grace, refinement and undoubted intelligence. The account of her first

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NEXT WEEK

The more we think of it, the more convinced we are that a situation which leaves many thousands of citizens without a representative in Congress is one of the real evils of contemporary American civic life. In THE VOICELESS VOTER, Mr. W. C. Murphy, jr., has written a fearless exposition of what it is and means. We are proud of Mr. Murphy's work for The Commonweal, and know that he is an intelligent and well-informed observer. . . . Professor Harry Elmer Barnes is at it again, threatening to clutch at the mantle of Bob Ingersoll. Father Francis Augustine Walsh, of the Benedictine Priory in Washington, has written a commentary on PROFESSOR BARNES AND SECULARISM. We think it a worthy sequel to Father Riggs's paper in the present issue. . . . James J. Walsh has paid a tribute to NICOLAS LEON. He was a great Mexican scholar, and it is fitting that the present plight of his country should not wholly obscure his memory. . . . In a Lighter Vein—that seems to be the appropriate term—Robert Sparks Walker has narrated experiences with a highly remarkable mule. MY MULE'S MENU is also replete with shrewd observation of animal habits and of nature generally. . . . HOMESTEADING THE CITIZEN, E. L. Chicanot's interesting paper, has been held over for next week, as a result of unforeseen complications. . . . We would also like to remind you that there will be abundant comment on events of the day.

years at the Berlin court give us an insight into her feelings, and the description of the subsequent events of her life, her acquaintance with Alexander I and with the great Napoleon, is also excellent. It is evident that at first the fascinating figure of the Czar attracted her to the extent that she saw in him the personification of everything that was noble and good, and perhaps of her own youthful dreams, but later on came disillusionment, until finally she had to acknowledge that Napoleon had not perhaps been altogether wrong when he had called the Czar a "Greek of the lower empire."

The book is exceedingly well translated, a fact which makes certain errors, evidently not those of the author, the more surprising. One of them is really amazing. It is to be found in a foot-note explaining that the German title "Erbprinz" is used "for a presumptive heir to a title. A crown prince is direct heir." In reality, "Crown Prince" in monarchist Germany was a title borne only by the eldest son and heir-apparent of an emperor or a king. "Erbprinz" was that of the son and heir-apparent of a German duchy or principality. Then again, Russian Grand Dukes are called "Archdukes," which was an Austrian title borne only by members of the Hapsburg family.

All this, however, is insignificant in the presence of the fact that the volume called Queen Louise of Prussia is a production of which its author has every reason to be proud.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

England's Record

England from Chaucer to Caxton, by H. S. Bennett. $1.75; England in Johnson's Day, by M. Dorothy George. $1.75; England in Shakespeare's Day, by G. B. Harrison. $1.75. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

SELECTIONS with a different flavor are provided in a new literary series, the general title of which—English Life in English Literature—is sufficiently ambitious. Whether Mr. Bennett succeeds in inducing the Chaucerian age to hold up a mirror before its countenance is one question; that he has pieced out a most interesting and serviceable book is another, which can be answered with an immediate affirmative. The range of authors is not very wide, but the pertinence with which these discuss various aspects of life—town and home, church and travel—is quite satisfactory. Here is a readable source book and a fine garnering of representative prose passages.

Miss George offers a more varied assortment of authors and topics to illustrate the career of England in the great Johnson's day. Here are reprinted Addison's impressions of the new Italian opera, Johnson on advertising, Fanny Burney on a royal holiday, and Hanway discussing tea. Considering the scope of the work, this book seems nearly the best introduction to the period and its literature. There is a surprising wealth of material, and a no less noticeable freshness of expression.

The Elizabethan age makes rather a poor showing in Mr. Harrison's book. This has been prepared with great care by a widely-read man; and it is not his fault if the material often seems stodgy and beside the point. The chroniclers of society in those days, he tells us, were nominally writers of abominable English, so that illustrative material had to be sought in the playwrights and the poets. Religion turned into arid debating between Puritans and their adversaries; the literary life hovered between flattery and amour propre; and education seems to have been largely a matter of cursing the pedagogue. The book is nevertheless useful and illuminating.

PAUL CROWLEY.

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Briefer Mention

Samuel Richardson, by Brian W. Downs. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

IT MAY be put down to the credit of the English that they usually manage to render biography entertaining and relatively brief. An impression seems to be getting abroad that a long life necessarily means a long book, and that even debunking requires a host of descriptive adjectives. Mr. Downs has not denied either the solemnity or the tediousness of Richardson, who in several respects is the world's champion literary bore. But his own book is sprightly and very well informed, critically keen and amiably human. Occasionally he waxes needlessly elaborate, but on the whole his work is a splendid advertisement for Cambridge composition courses. The reader will find three neat compartments, into which Richardson's person, work and influence are respectively inserted. It need hardly be remarked that eighteenth-century novelists are not subjects for a squeamish pen or pair of eyes, but Mr. Downs has not permitted his genuine wit to part company with decency. The book is about all a scholar could wish for, and as interesting a short biography as you may find this year.

The Road, by André Chamson; translated by Van Wyck Brooks. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

COMBES and Audibert work together on the new road out of Saint-André. Both are from the meagre uplands, where people ask little of life and are given no bounty. The new environment brings greater opportunity and ease; but when Combes has married Elise, his remains a peasant family circumscribed by an almost pitiless thrift and tenacity of purpose. Mr. Chamson's art triumphs in the deftness with which details are inserted into this cadre. The rhythm of existence itself substitutes for dramatic tension; and what the characters do not afford of subtle analysis they retrieve in definiteness of outline. Possibly nothing elevates a book like this so near to poetry as the element of a contemplation akin to prayer which permeates the story told. Here is a religion not of ecstasy but of acceptance. For Combes God unquestionably exists, but not as One Who must be "importuned" into the petty businesses of life. The Road is a fine exemplification of the sobriety of the newer French novel; the translation, remarkably limpid.

The Bishop Murder Case, by S. S. Van Dine. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

IT was a foregone conclusion after the success of The Benson Murder Case and The Canary Murder Case that Mr. Van Dine would continue with his novels based on the remarkable cerebrations of Mr. Vance. In The Bishop Murder Case, unfortunately, he himself has killed his detective as a fiction figure. The impossibility of such a character, whose conversations drip erudite references to Cellini plaques, tensors, quadratic equations, chemical formulas, chess gambits, Ibsen neurotics and Beethoven's thematics, has become too glaring. Consequently an atmosphere of unreality is cast over the entire book and the reader, from this standpoint alone, must dismiss the entire plot as preposterous. As a writer Mr. Van Dine is extremely ingenious and the concluding incidents in which the murderer eliminates himself show him at his best. Such excellence leads to the hope that he will acquire a new formula of plot construction, discard the omniscient Vance, and give us more from his pen.

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Destinies, by François Mauriac; translated by Eric Sutton. New York: Covici, Friede, Incorporated. $2.50.

ONE is grateful for the assurance that almost everything by Mauriac is to be published in translation. Few modern writers require so much of you in the way of knowledge of their development or their work as a whole. Destinies belongs to the same period as Thérèse. Both are stories in which a soul uncontrolled by objective mandates rushes toward a doom which is at once a condemnation of its own self and an ironical commentary on the world at large. The most impressive part of the present book has to deal with the subtle erosion of Elizabeth Gormac's carefully barricaded personality under the influence of a youthful hero who is almost Eros incarnate. Mauriac's method here is far more objective than it was in his earlier novels, and one is conscious of a compression which, at times, seems nearly artificial. This cramps his philosophy and well-nigh reduces his canvas to the dimensions required for the nouvelle. But he has gained strength of outline and feeling from the discipline. There can be no doubt that his is a part of the contemporary French fiction which is important.

Letters from Baron Friedrich von Hügel to a Niece; edited by Gwendolen Greene. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

THE Baron von Hügel certainly never dreamed of writing a "popular spiritual classic," and yet the present collection of letters to a favorite niece is just that. Strangely enough the correspondence, though dotted with mannerisms, does not reveal much of the writer's own personality. Here he is primarily the diviner of other souls and the exponent of religious truth realized as objective and holy. So many aspects of doctrine and history are touched upon, in a manner so salutary and modern, that one's own spiritual life is deepened by the mere reading. But a soul which actually followed out the suggestions prodigally offered by the little book would grow into the very finest realm of spiritual traditions. The volume will correct many erroneous impressions of the baron's outlook.

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